PRINTED BY MORRISON AND GIBB,

FOR

T. & T. CLARK, EDINBURGH.

LONDON: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, HAMILTON, KENT, AND CO. LIMITED.

NEW YORK: CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS.

OUR LORD'S SIGNS

IN

ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL.

OUR LORD'S SIGNS

IN

St. John's Gospel.

DISCUSSIONS

CHIEFLY EXEGETICAL AND DOCTRINAL

ON

THE EIGHT MIRACLES IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

BY

JOHN HUTCHISON, D.D.,

BONNINGTON, EDINBURGH;

AUTHOR OF

"EXPOSITORY LECTURES ON ST. PAUL'S EPISTLES TO THE THESSALONIANS, AND THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS,"

AND

"OUR LORD'S MESSAGES TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES."

EDINBURGH:

T. & T. CLARK, 38 GEORGE STREET.

1892.

"Verbum Dei, Deo Natum,
Quod nec factum, nec creatum
Venit de cœlestibus,
Hoc vidit, hoc attrectavit,
Hoc de cœlo reseravit
Johannes hominibus.

Inter illos primitivos
Veros veri fontis rivos
Johannes exiliit,
Toti mundo propinare
Nectar illud salutare
Quod de throno prodiit."

Hymnus de S. Johanne Evangelista.
Mone, *Hymni Med. Aevi.* iii. 118.

PREFACE.

The work which I now venture to publish is, in design, very similar to those which I have already issued. It is mainly expository, although homiletical aims have not been rigidly set aside. Exposition of Scripture can hardly, with profit, be entirely severed from practical interests.

It has long seemed to me that the miracles recorded in the fourth Gospel may well be studied as a distinct group. They bear marks, both in themselves and in their setting, which to a large extent distinguish them from those narrated in the synoptic Gospels. As the name of "signs" indicates, their symbolical purpose is pre-eminently clear, even though their individual significance may in some cases be difficult to discover.

Under this conviction I have endeavoured to provide a careful, and even a minute, exegesis of each narrative, in such a form that it can be easily read by the ordinary student of Scripture, who desires to make a study of the details, without being burdened and disheartened by the use of purely scientific terms and methods. In seeking to attain this end, I have given attention, not only to Patristic and even Medieval exposition, but also,

and chiefly, to modern commentaries, whatever be the schools to which they severally belong. The result may seem meagre; but I am hopeful that the labour so expended may prove not altogether devoid of value. I have had a further aim in view: that of ascertaining what each sign, as recorded by the Evangelist, is designed to teach or emphasise. This is by no means, in some instances, an easy task; nor can any one feel confident that he has discharged it. We have no definite system of rules, in such an inquiry, on which reliance for guidance may be placed. It has been too common for each commentator, according to his own theological point of view, or according to his own individual taste, to lay stress on some part of the incident rather than on others. From such varying methods a general consensus cannot be expected. We have only to look at much of present-day preaching to see how frequently minor details are pressed into service, and the prominent idea of the sign altogether ignored. I have therefore attempted to discover, if possible, the central point of view from which each sign ought to be considered. This may be found, either in the record itself, or in its surroundings. With the exception of the third and fourth, these miracles are all, more or less, explained and illustrated by the parts of the Gospel which lie near them. This fact has been taken into account in trying to ascertain their significance.

The tabulation, which is offered on page 11, is to be accepted as a scheme, accurate in a general sense, and

nothing more. It may serve a useful purpose in grouping the eight signs.

It need hardly be stated that these miracles are treated only in the two aspects which have been described. There are, of course, other aspects which have been designedly left entirely unnoticed.

There are full and useful monographs on several of these miracles. Notably may be mentioned that of Professor Paulus Cassel, of Berlin, on "the water made wine at Galilee," *Die Hochzeit von Cana, theologisch und historisch in Symbol, Kunst und Legende ausgelegt*, an interesting treatise which owed its origin to the Silver Marriage of the late Emperor Friedrich of Ger many, January 25th, 1883, and was published as a memorial of that event. A most exhaustive study of "the raising of Lazarus," by Gumlich, entitled *Die Räthsel der Erweckung Lazari*, is to be found in the *Studien und Kritiken*, 1862. There are also mono-graphs by Professor Steinmeyer, of Berlin, on "the raising of Lazarus" and "the healing of the man born blind," in addition to his book on *Die Wunderthaten des Herrn.*[1] These last I regret that I have not had an opportunity of using, all the more that many years ago I had the privilege of attending his much valued academic course on this Gospel as a whole.

The notes, fragmentary as they are, may prove of some interest to the student, if not to the general reader. They may help to open up some lines of thought.

[1] Transl. (Edin. T. & T. Clark), *The Miracles of our Lord.*

As on former occasions, I am much indebted to the Rev. D. W. Forrest, M.A., Moffat, for careful revision of the proof-sheets; and also to the Rev. Thomas Crawford, M.A., B.D., for a like service. My brother, the Rev. M. B. Hutchison, M.A., of Lincoln College, Oxford, Examining Chaplain to the Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway, has, as usual, given me his valued aid.

Afton Lodge, Bonnington,
April 5th, 1892.

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTORY.

"*Sed quia omnia, quæ fecit Dominus Jesus Christus non solum valent ad excitanda corda nostra miraculis, sed etiam ad ædificanda in doctrina fidei scrutari nos oportet quid sibi velint illa omnia id est quid significent.*"—AUGUSTIN, *Tractat.* ix. 1.

"Him
Whose life was more than words, for words are dim ;
His deeds are lamps, that brighter, farther shine,
That men may see, and seeing, hail divine."

MRS. LIONEL A. TOLLEMACHE in *Safe Studies.*

INTRODUCTORY.

IT is a mere commonplace to say that the fourth Gospel is still the battlefield of controversy. As much as in earlier days, it still attracts the love of friends and the hate of foes. While it has constantly been assailed as the very citadel which the enemies of Christianity seek at all costs to overthrow, it continues to be accepted by Christ's people as the most valued storehouse of their spiritual food. The Emperor Julian the Apostate, deploring the decay of æsthetic heathenism in the presence of the ever-growing triumphs of Christianity, with a true insight into the nature of the case, despairingly exclaimed: "It is this John who, in declaring that the Word was made flesh, has done all the mischief."[1] It is natural, therefore, that those who are "of the truth" should hold fast this Gospel, and surrender themselves to it as the very heart of Christ.[2] Lessing, the father, as he has been called, of modern Rationalism, thus writes: "John's Gospel alone gave the Christian religion its true consistency; we have to thank his Gospel alone if the Christian religion still continues in this consistency notwithstanding all attacks, and will, we may suppose, continue as long as there are men who believe they need a Mediator between them and the Divinity—that is, for ever."[3]

[1] Godet, i. p. 27. [2] Ernesti has called it "pectus Christi."
[3] Quoted by Sime, Lessing, *His Life and Writings*, ii. p. 230.

A testimony of this kind makes it clear that this book, so far removed as it is in its contemplative elevation from all earthly turmoil, is yet emphatically set as a meeting-point of ceaseless strife.

The conflict still rages as to the authorship. Scholarship, to say the least of it, is certainly as much ranged on the traditional side as on the other. Dr. Watkins, in his recent Bampton Lectures on "Modern Criticism and the fourth Gospel," has done much in the region of external evidence to fortify the old position. Especially has he depicted for us, and that with no little power, the whole surroundings, social and intellectual, of the Church in Ephesus, which help to explain the peculiar form and phraseology of the Gospel. The more vividly we try to realise this environment to ourselves, the more readily do we occupy the right standpoint for contemplating and understanding this "spiritual Gospel" as its product. Accepting then without discussion—indeed our design in no way demands it—the Johannean authorship, we hold that it was in accordance with the needs of his time and the mental attitude of his first readers that he — the disciple who bears the title of "Dilectus Dilector Dei"[1]—penned in extreme old age, not strictly a narrative, for there are many gaps in it, and constant dislocation of chronological order; not strictly even a formal treatise, for there is little of sustained and consecutive reasoning in it; but pre-eminently and peculiarly a personal testimony, and that in the form most likely to appeal to the intellectual movements of his age. As with a diamond-point, he has caused to stand out before the eye the most clearly cut sentences which set forth personal declarations—leaving no room

[1] Anselm, *Orat.* 68.

for doubt as to what his purpose is—"These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." We need not be disturbed by the theory recently so ably revived by Professor Wendt, that the unity of this Gospel is to be set aside, the sayings of our Lord being alone accepted as the original part of the treatise, the historical parts being regarded as additions made by John's disciples. Of course it is entirely beyond the scope of our design to discuss this ingenious attempt to make a cleavage in what has hitherto almost invariably been regarded as a whole. It is perhaps sufficient to set over against it the utterance of Dr. Martineau, all the more telling that he rejects entirely the Johannean authorship. "It is plainly," he says, "a whole, the production of a single mind,—a mind imbued with a conception of its subject, consistent and complete, and not less distinct from being mystical and of rare spiritual depth."[1] The unbiassed, sympathetic reader feels that this witness is true.

This blending of the philosophical and the devotional, so peculiarly the characteristic of this Gospel, has led many a reader of it to declare, as Schleiermacher did of his death-bed experiences: "I have the deepest speculative thoughts presented me, and they are all one with the most devout religious emotions." While this holds good very specially of our Lord's words thus recorded, it is also true in regard to His works. It is to these latter that our attention is throughout to be turned. The position of these works is quite conspicuous enough in the book to arrest attention. In the fourfold Gospel there are, as usually enumerated, thirty-eight miracles ascribed to our Lord. Of these the author of the

[1] *Seat of Authority in Religion*, p. 189.

fourth Gospel records only seven belonging to Christ's ministry proper, and a solitary supplemental one belonging to the forty days' period between the resurrection and the ascension. The number "seven" symbolises, as is well known, completeness and covenant-relationship between heaven and earth.[1] It is not far-fetched to imagine that this conception was before the author's mind. Seven, with a supplemental eighth, is too frequently met with in Scripture—Old and New Testaments alike—to be quietly ignored in such a case as this. There is, further, every reason to believe that he was personally acquainted with the whole circle of his Master's works of wonder. Indeed, he himself substantially declares that he was. Yet, as we shall see, he selects for the special purpose he has in view what may be called typical samples—those, namely, which fit naturally into the general plan of his treatise. Looking at these from this point of view, we may almost regard them as the backbone of the whole work. They are manifestly there, each in its own place, not as part of a rigidly progressive narrative, but as helping to unfold, not so much the story of our Lord's life, as the significance of His ministry. They seem "exquisite narratives interspersed, standing out like islets of rare beauty in the broad expanse of some quiet lake,"[2] and from each one separately some new point of view may be obtained for a survey of the whole.

Once more these works are called emphatically "signs." This is their significant title—works, that is to say, visible on earth that they may be mirrors of

[1] *Vide* Bähr's *Symbolik des Mosaischen Cultus*, i. pp. 233–247, for much biblical and philological lore on this point; and also Donaldson's *New Cratylus*, p. 291, and Delitzsch on Heb. xii. 22.

[2] Tayler on *St. John's Gospel*, p. 6.

heavenly and spiritual things. They look back to the almighty power of the Divine Word in creation: "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that hath been made;" and they looked forward to that same almighty power in the new creation: "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." Considered in this way, they are what Professor Bruce has called Miracles of State, rather than like those of the Synoptics, Miracles of Humanity.[1] They are, it is true, manifestations of our Lord's loving-kindness; but in their chief design they are pre-eminently manifestations of His glory. In regard, therefore, to their ultimate aim, they have been well designated incarnate doctrine.[2] It is, then, when we study these miracles in this light, that we most surely recognise them as helps, not hindrances, to faith. Rousseau long ago said, that if we took the miracles out of the Gospels, the whole world would lie at the feet of Christ.[3] Many in our day have felt and spoken in an exactly similar way. There is, however, an entire misapprehension in such an attitude towards the miraculous in the Gospel narrative. Not to speak of their evidential value, which may easily enough be unduly emphasised, the miracles are actual parables; hieroglyphics, they may be called, of spiritual truth. And as such, so far from repelling, they can never lose their power in bringing the world to the Saviour's feet.

If this view be justified, and indeed it never has been seriously controverted, it follows that much instruction may be found in the study of the signs recorded in the

[1] *The Miraculous Element in the Gospels*, p. 151.

[2] "Die Wunder des Messias sind fleischgewordene Lehre," Dr. Cassel, *Die Hochzeit von Cana*, p. 39.

[3] "Ôtez les Miracles de l'Evangile et toute la terre est aux pieds de Jesus Christ."

fourth Gospel in their relation to one another and in their bearing upon the teaching of the book as a whole. Separately, they are stray beams of light; together, they shine with clear and steady brightness. But how is this study to be pursued? Recognising the fact that the Evangelist delights in mystic symbolism, we must, of course, adapt our exegetical method to that fact. But here at once begins our difficulty. We may be seduced into falling into the excessive mystical and allegorical style of treatment which has brought patristic and medieval exposition so much into disrepute. This danger is undoubtedly real. The "Lesbian rule of lead," as it has been called, ever twisting and bending according to the holder's own caprice, can be no safe measuring-rod for Scripture truth. Yet there are some safeguards against this tendency, not very difficult to be found, and when found never to be disregarded. There are hints as to the right and sober method of exposition to be discovered, both in the features themselves of each narrative and in the setting in which each narrative appears. These hints are peculiarly frequent and significant in this Gospel. They are amply sufficient to guide us in the way of prudent and reverent exegesis. Keeping close by these, as best we may, we need not be afraid of speaking even of the fourfold sense of Scripture, as the old distich puts it—

> "*Litera* gesta docet; quid credas, *allegoria*;
> *Moralis*, quod ages; quid speres, *anagogia*."

Indeed, in so far as the miracles of this Gospel are concerned, we have a most striking instance of extremes meeting. Patristic exposition, as is well known, sees secret significance even in the minutest

and most subordinate details of these miracles. So also, strange to say, does rationalistic exposition. With an entirely different aim,—the setting aside altogether of the historical reality of the miracles,—Rationalism reaches precisely the same conclusion. It, in serving its own ends, strives to turn everything into allegory. Almost as many puerile and strained and fanciful interpretations can be found in the one school as in the other. Thus there emerges this curious result, that whether these miracles be accepted as historic or not, both parties agree in discovering in them substantially the same teaching. As a somewhat striking illustration of the tendency of the negative school in this respect, an anonymous tractate may be adduced, which has been making considerable stir among the German people, to whom it is specially addressed.[1] Its purpose is to show how the Bible miracles, being now hopelessly destroyed as history, may yet be retained as valuable — indeed more valuable than ever for all purposes of practical religious teaching. Here is one of its deliverances:[2] "We hear it often said of these narratives of Bible miracles, either they took place as they are recorded to have done, or these narratives are lies, and those who wrote them liars. But are these the only two possibilities of the case? Is it not plain that beyond those of reality and falsehood there is yet a third possibility that partakes of neither, namely, poetic fiction, having a didactic purpose? The parables, for instance; no one thinks of them as relating either true or false incidents. They are not

[1] "*Die biblischen Wundergeschichten*, vom Verfasser des Buches," *Im Kampf um die Weltanschauung*, Freiburg 1890.

[2] P. 19.

estimated in this way at all. There is recognised in them, not literal fact, but truth in figurative form. This is of the very essence of such fiction, and it is felt at once that just on this account is it most suited to portray the highest truths. Accordingly we most worthily estimate the Bible miracles when we endeavour in a similar way to understand them as didactic fiction. In this way no offence is given to the intellect, and the true meaning reaches and works freely upon the spirit." This method of treatment is elaborately recommended to families and schools and churches as alone honest and profitable. Such an impotent conclusion as this, however,—the rejection of our Lord's works as historical, and the retention of them as none the less instructive,—will not bear scrutiny. It seems at best to be what Unitarianism has been wittily called, "a feather-bed to catch a falling Christian,"—an anxious attempt, in other words, to retain hold of the Christian faith at the very time when there is the consciousness of falling away from it.

But to return to our point; while carefully avoiding the extremes of the patristic method, and entirely disowning the rationalistic, we may learn from both—opposite points of view as they are—that the historic reality of these "signs" in the fourth Gospel is not the only, nor even the chief aspect, in which they are to be contemplated. Their enduring spiritual significance as "signs" is the main matter for us all.

Studying them under this conviction, we shall find that, while together they form an integral part of the structural plan of the whole book, they are fraught with the noblest teaching as to the glory of our Lord and His kingdom, in relation to the individual soul, to the universal Church, and to the world.

THE MIRACLES OF THIS GOSPEL MAY BE THUS TABULATED:—

THE INAUGURAL SIGN, chap. ii. 1–11.

The water made wine at Cana, illustrating our Lord's glory in the transforming and ennobling influences of His kingdom.

FIRST PAIR OF SIGNS, chap. iv. 43–54, and chap. v. 1–18.

(*a*) The healing of the nobleman's son at Capernaum.	The blessings of our Lord's kingdom realised by faith.
(*b*) The healing of the impotent man at Bethesda.	These blessings manifested in sanctification.

These signs depict our Lord's glory in His kingdom in relation to the individual soul.

SECOND PAIR OF SIGNS, chap. vi. 1–14 and 15–21.

(*a*) The feeding of the five thousand.	Our Lord the Divine Giver of sustenance to His people.
(*b*) The walking on the sea of Galilee.	Our Lord the Divine Giver of protection to His people.

These signs depict His glory in His kingdom in relation to His Church on earth.

THIRD PAIR OF SIGNS, chaps. ix. and xi.

(*a*) The healing of the man born blind.	Our Lord the Light of the world lying in darkness.
(*b*) The raising of Lazarus of Bethany from the dead.	Our Lord the Life of the world lying in death.

These signs depict His glory in His kingdom in relation to the world.

THE SUPPLEMENTAL, POST-RESURRECTION SIGN, chap. xxi. 1–14.

The second miraculous draught of fishes.	The final fulfilment of the blessings of our Lord's kingdom.

I.

"Unde rubor vestris, et non sua purpura, lymphis?
Quæ rosa mirantes tam nova mutat aquas?
Numen, convivæ, præsens agnoscite Numen:
Lympha pudica Deum vidit, et erubuit!"

Epigrammata Sacra, 1634.

THE WATER MADE WINE AT CANA.

THE WATER MADE WINE AT CANA.

(John ii. 1–11.)

I. THE EXPOSITION.

THE opening words are not without significance: "And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee." The suggestion that they should run: "There was a marriage in Cana of Galilee in its third day," Jewish weddings being usually prolonged throughout a week,[1] may be at once set aside. It is altogether forced and unnatural. Another suggestion, that "the third day" means the third day of the Jewish week,—the day which Rabbinical teaching and usage specially set apart for the marriage ceremony,—is also to be rejected. However supported by Jewish lore,[2] it cannot commend itself as the simple rendering of the words. "The third day" as a note of sequence merely serves to connect the narrative with what has gone before. But there lies imbedded in it a hidden design. The first chapter unfolds to us a whole series of days, each marked by its own outstanding incident. On the first of these days the Baptist gave his witness on behalf of the Saviour to the inquiring priests and Levites. On the second, he pointed with outstretched finger to that same Saviour, who probably had just returned from the temptation in the wilderness, declaring Him

[1] Stanley Leathes in *Expositor*, 1877, v. 305.

[2] *Vide* Dr. Paulus Cassel, *Die Hochzeit von Cana theologisch und historisch in Symbol, Kunst und Legende ausgelegt*, Berlin 1883.

to be the Lamb of God. On the third, he revealed the Saviour as the Messias to Andrew and another of his disciples, apparently the Evangelist himself, who both thereupon followed their new Teacher. As the old saying has it, they forsook—discarded—the candle-light, now that they had found the light of the sun. On the fourth day, Jesus repaired to Galilee, where He found Philip, and where Philip on his part found Nathanael, and where both accepted Him as their Master. Now it is the third day after this fourth that is given as the date of this miracle—this beginning of signs. The incidents of the intervening fifth and sixth days are left unrecorded. The time, however, must have been for the most part spent in the journey to Cana. Patristic ingenuity has busied itself in this connection with instituting a comparison between the days recorded in the opening of the Book of Genesis, and these days alluded to in the fourth Gospel, which describe the Genesis of the New Dispensation, the consummation in both cases being the institution and celebration of marriage. Such fancies, however beautiful, cannot commend themselves to sober exegesis. All that is noticeable here is that the Evangelist has depicted the beginnings of Christ's kingdom in a few abrupt short statements of several days' events,—events full of interest, which find at length their climax in this work of power. The new Teacher had now some followers. Their loyalty to Him was undoubted; but their faith in Him stood in need of enlightenment. As yet they knew little about their Master, though they loved Him well, and doubtless trusted Him to the full. Besides, He had already excited within their breasts a certain eager expectancy, when, for instance, He said directly to Nathanael: "Thou shalt see greater

things than these," and yet more, "Verily, verily, I say unto you," including in the "you" the others, "Ye shall see the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." This expectancy, cherished by hearts as yet untaught, needed some support. Hence in order that it might not shift into despondency, He graciously granted this sign. In this work of power, by establishing His Messianic claims, He at the same time established their hearts. He further showed, for all time, that as the foundations of His new kingdom had been laid in brotherly love, so its growth and blessings were to be seen in the sanctities of family and home.

Cana of Galilee was the scene of this first miracle. The site cannot with certainty be known. The modern village of Kefr-kenna, a little more than four miles north-east of Nazareth, lying on the road to the Lake of Galilee, has the strongest claims in its favour. Here was the home of Nathanael, where we may conceive our Lord, for the time being, to have been received as an honoured guest.[1] There were clinging to this district many memories of His childhood and early years. Hence the peculiar propriety of its now becoming the scene of His first manifested glory. Here not only His immediate followers, but also His mother and brethren, along with others, His acquaintances and friends who formed the wedding company, were permitted to witness the earliest evidence of His Messiahship.

The late tradition, that the Evangelist John was himself the bridegroom, is at entire variance with all the facts we know of his history. This legend of Bonaventura, as well as that other supported by Nicephorus,

[1] Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus, the Messiah*, i. 356.

that the bridegroom was Simon of Cana, the son of Mary, sister of our Lord's mother, is unhesitatingly to be rejected. We are entitled to surmise no more than this, that the family circle was well known to Jesus, and that its friendship was a possession which He greatly prized. Hence He was an invited guest, and with Him His disciples. These were John and Andrew and Peter and Philip, and Nathanael whom He had just called. The word "disciples" may possibly, however, include some others of His followers. Where He Himself was respected, His friends would not be unwelcome. "The mother of Jesus was there," being possibly a relative of one of the parties. She seems, at all events, to have been present at an earlier stage in the festivities, and even prominent enough to mingle with, and, in some respects, to take the management of the arrangements. Without unseemly interference, she could bid the servants to obey her Son. No mention is made of Joseph. He may have been, as is generally supposed, already dead, although chap. vi. 42 rather militates against this conclusion.

At some undefined point of the festival, prolonged, it may be, through several days, "the wine failed." The deficiency of supply may readily enough be conjectured to have arisen, not merely from the presence of our Lord and His disciples, but chiefly from the unexpected arrival of many who eagerly sought to see Him,—strangers even, to whom the rites of hospitality at such a joyous season would in no wise be denied. At all events there was embarrassment; there was annoyance, if not actual distress. Mary's tender heart felt this most. She keenly shared the shame which the discovery of the scanty supply could not fail to cast upon the bride and bridegroom. The reason of

the shame is not to be sought simply in the implied lack of hospitality, but chiefly in the punctilious ceremonial of Jewish marriage. It was commonly held that no marriage was valid without the formal act of blessing. A bride over whose nuptials the seven blessings had not been pronounced was actually regarded as still unmarried. These seven blessings, further, could not properly be uttered without the use of wine. Many rabbinical illustrations of this usage may be adduced.[1] For instance, it is said, "He only who speaks the blessing over a full cup of wine comes into possession of the two worlds." We may therefore in all likelihood find the deepest reason of Mary's solicitude in these traditional practices. The thought of foregoing them at the stern bidding of necessity was painful to her sympathetic heart. Hence she said to her Son, "They have no wine." Some definite design doubtless prompted the words. It is far-fetched to suppose that there was couched in them a gentle hint that He and His company should withdraw before their host's embarrassment appeared, and that the reply, "Mine hour is not yet come," simply means that the time for their retiring had not yet arrived. The more natural suggestion, adopted by Luther and others, that Mary, in the quiet retreat of her own home life, had already witnessed evidences of Jesus' wonder-working power, and, relying upon these, now ventured to call upon Him for its more public display, is also to be rejected. Not to speak of the Evangelist's unqualified and emphatic declaration, that this was the inaugural miracle—the "beginning of signs," we can hardly conceive that the thought of miraculous intervention could definitely occur to

[1] *Vide* Dr. Cassel, p. 82.

her in the presence of so simple and commonplace a dilemma,—a mere dislocation of domestic arrangements, however annoying. The exercise of power, so startling and abnormal, by her Son, could not have been suggested to her mind by so trivial an event. The most satisfactory view is certainly this, that ofttimes before, in the ordinary concerns of daily life, He had allayed her anxieties and solved her difficulties. She was therefore now, as was her wont, simply confiding her cares to His sympathetic breast. She who had kept all the sayings of the shepherds, "pondering them in her heart," felt, from many past experiences, that the greater her perplexity, the surer she was of finding helpful counsel from Him whom, while she loved Him as her Son, she reverenced also as her Lord.

The answer is abrupt and unexpected. "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come." These somewhat startling words at once arrest us. They seem to grate upon our feeling, as if there was something disrespectful, even unfilial, about them. We almost incline to exclaim, as Augustine puts it, "What is this? Came He for this cause to the marriage, that He might teach men to set light by their mothers!" But the strangeness of the utterance is in no sense difficult to explain. No elaborate reasoning is needed to vindicate our Lord from any unworthy aspersion. The appellation "woman" has no necessary severity in it. It may even breathe more than usual respect. Nor does any harshness lie in the interrogatory form of the sentence. Such a form is only a familiar and favourite Hebrew way of emphasising a point, as indeed it is also with ourselves. Nor are we entitled to assume that there was aught of reproach either in the tone of the utterance or in the gesture which

accompanied it. We may at once set aside all suggestions of this kind. Yet "while the words are not unfriendly, they are estranging."[1] And why so? "The mother of Jesus," as the Evangelist expressly designates her, in the request or command which she had tacitly made to her Son, relied apparently on the relation in which, as mother of His humanity, she stood to Him. She needed therefore to be taught that this earthly bond had henceforth lost its significance. Now that His public ministry had begun, the loving subjection of His earlier days must cease. There is now, indeed, a reversal of relationship. As the Divine Logos, about to manifest His glory in His power,—about to work a miracle of which Mary's heart had up to this point no forecasting thought, He could only say, as He elsewhere did, "I and My Father are one." Thus far as to the first part of the answer; but what about the second, "Mine hour is not yet come"? Greater difficulty is involved in it. It is altogether inept to weaken it into some such paraphrase as this: "My time, the time at which, from the Father's appointment and My own concurring will, I am to begin miraculous working, is not yet arrived: forestall it not."[2] Mary's words, as we have seen, do not appear to point to such intervention at all; and if this be so, then a reply of this kind from her Son's lips would be entirely inappropriate. Besides, any explanation on such a line as this seems trifling, amounting, as it does, to no more than this, that there is no call for haste, that there must be an hour or two of delay, though why such delay should be needful remains unexplained. We must seek, therefore, some deeper solution of the utterance. We find it without much

[1] Luthardt. [2] Alford.

difficulty when we remember the solemn and significant way in which our Lord, in this Gospel, speaks of what He calls *His* hour, and the *coming* of it.[1] He signifies thereby the time when the work appointed Him to do was to be undertaken and completed. He alludes to the time of His suffering and death. There is thus a reference, thus early in His ministry, and in the midst of the festivities of a bridal day, to the hour of His passion—that which He Himself calls Satan's hour, as well as His own. Before He went forth to suffer as the Lamb of God, as His Forerunner had at first announced Him, He thus addressed the Jewish and Gentile mob that in the darkness of night had come out against Him: "This is your hour, and the power of darkness."[2] It was the hour when the deadliest enmity of sin appeared to triumph, and yet in *His* actual triumph was overthrown. But why allude to that hour here? What possible connection can it have with the mother of Jesus and her present dilemma? She had confided her trouble to Him about the failing wine, and He answers her by a mysterious reference to the hour of His final suffering and shame. How is this enigma to be solved? Probably in this way: in her extreme solicitude that all shall go well in the wedding feast, Mary had met, and that for the first time, with something like a reproof, a repulse from the gentle lips of her Son. Her maternal authority had been disowned. Her desire, indeed, was to be met and gratified, but in a manner as yet entirely unexpected; His intervention was to be of a kind that could not acknowledge her well-meant interference. While, therefore, the repulse could not be spared, it is softened and subdued by that which follows.—"What have I to do with thee?"

[1] vii. 30, viii. 20, xii. 27, xvii. 1. [2] Luke xxii. 53.

Nothing now, but a time, distant yet approaching, is spoken of—the hour of His human weakness. Then, He declares, would He acknowledge her through whom that weakness came. And so we know He did. While He could not own her now in the manifestation of His power, He at last owned her ere He bowed His head and gave up the ghost. In His humiliation, as He hung upon the cross, He commended her to the care of that disciple by whom both incidents are recorded. "He saith unto His mother, Woman, behold thy Son! Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy mother!" Thus Cana and Calvary alike reveal the Saviour's heart of love. If this be the solution,[1] the question has still to be asked, How could Mary thus early in our Lord's teaching and ministry in any way understand an utterance of this kind? We may at once own that she could not. To her it was a hidden thing; yet, doubtless, one of the many which she treasured. She "kept all these sayings in her heart," and in due time they became plain.

In this incident of the first miracle all warrant for Mariolatry is shattered and overthrown. All earthly ties, in their tenderness and pathos, our Lord has duly recognised and honoured. But in so far as these sought to dominate the things of the higher world, to Him they are as nought. He Himself has declared, "Whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in Heaven, he is My brother, and sister, and mother." In answer to the exclamation, "Blessed is the womb that bare Thee, and the breasts which Thou didst suck," He said, "Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it."

Mary's whole-hearted humility shines forth in what

[1] Wordsworth, following Augustin, substantially adopts it.

follows. Even from the apparent repulse she won new confidence that help was at hand. There was no decline of her reliance in her Son's wisdom and goodness. It would seem, on the contrary, that some presentiment, however vague, may now have seized her, or that some hint, though it be unrecorded, may have been given her, of what was to be the issue of things. At all events, she surmised that the agency of the attendants was to be sought. She said to them, inculcating upon them the ready submission which she herself had learned, "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it."[1] "Now there were six waterpots of stone set there, after the Jews' manner of purifying, containing two or three firkins apiece." These water jars—Bethlehem stoneware we may imagine them to have been, for the Talmud mentions Lydda and Bethlehem as towns noted for their stoneware works[2]—were ranged in something like order, outside of the reception-room. Their exact capacity cannot now be ascertained, owing to the varying measures in use at that time in Palestine. Each of the vessels, however, according to the more likely estimate, contained from seventeen to twenty-five gallons.[3] Their use was for ceremonial purification, for "all Jews, except they wash their hands diligently, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders."[4] They were now empty, or at

[1] The two utterances of the mother of our Lord which we have in the record of this miracle are her last recorded words—the "desiring to see Thee" being told Him by a stranger's lips—are used by Ruskin, *Fors Clavigera*, vii. 389, in a far-fetched way indeed, but very effectively, as a text for pressing the claims of the poor on general sympathy and help. "The first sentence of these two contains the appeal of the workman's wife to her Son for the help of the poor of all the earth. The second, the command of the Lord's mother, to the people of all the earth, that they should serve the Lord."

[2] Wichelhaus. [3] *Vid.* Edersheim, i. 358. [4] Mark vii. 3.

least not full. The rites of ablution having been duly observed, the guests were done with them. It is important to notice that this fact was known to the servants; they were thus unimpeachable witnesses of the reality of the miracle. "Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim." In this command, enjoining the exact agency which she had expected, He at once rescued His mother from all possible imputation of officious ignorance. Then follow the words which apparently mark the moment of transformation, — when the water straightway flashed into wine,—when as Dryden, rendering the old Latin, has it—

"The unconscious water blushed to see its God."

"Draw out now, and bear unto the ruler of the feast." "Now,"—the change at this point took place. The manner is untold, because for us it would be unintelligible. From the Fathers downwards it has been customary to institute a parallel between this work of power and those other works of power which are present ceaselessly in nature, and yet ceaselessly unnoticed. It is said, The water which was made wine by a word at Cana once, is made wine by the vintage every year. It is true, Bishop Westcott carefully seeks to guard us against this popular analogy as false and misleading, declaring that "the two processes have absolutely nothing in common, so that the one cannot even illustrate the other."[1] Let it be granted that this is so: a believing, God-seeing heart will not on that account refuse to adopt the words of Kingsley, words which our age needs more than some others have done: "The Lord is a giver

[1] *Vid. The Gospel of the Resurrection*, p. 38.

and not a taskmaster. He does not demand from us: He gives to us. He had been giving from the foundation of the world. Corn and wine, rain and sunshine and fruitful seasons had been His sending. And now He has come to show it. He has come to show men who it was who had been filling their heart with joy and gladness, who had been bringing out of the earth and air, by His unseen chemistry, the wine which maketh glad the heart of man. In every grape that hangs upon the vine, water is changed into wine as the sap ripens into rich juice. He had been doing that all along, in every vineyard and orchard; and that was His glory. Now He was come to prove that: to draw back the veil of custom and carnal sense, and manifest Himself. . . . I make the wine; I have been making it all along. The vines, the sun, the weather, are only My tools wherewith I worked, turning rain and sap into wine; I am greater than they. . . . Behold, see My glory *without* the vineyard, since you had forgotten how to see it *in* the vineyard."[1]

Obeying our Lord's command, the servants bare the wine they had drawn "unto the ruler of the feast." This functionary was no upper servant or steward placed in charge, but rather one of the guests, chosen and appointed to this honourable post, either by the company or by the host. There are indications that this office at Jewish weddings was frequently sustained by a person of sacerdotal rank.[2] Be this as it may, the master of ceremonies, as it was his official duty to do,

[1] *Sermons on National Subjects.*

[2] Webster and Wilkinson adduce Schleusner, quoting Gaudentius, in support of this. Edersheim writes, i. 355: "Here it ought to be specially noticed, as a striking evidence that the writer of the fourth Gospel was not only a Hebrew, but intimately acquainted with the varying customs prevailing in Galilee and in Judæa, that at the marriage

"tasted the water now become wine" before its general circulation took place. He did so in ignorance. He "knew not whence it was (but the servants which had drawn the water knew)." It has been said, The ignorance of the ruler of the feast attested the good quality of the wine; the knowledge of the servants attested the reality of the miracle. Both thus served their part. With a purposed pleasantry the presiding guest straightway exclaimed, as he called to the bridegroom, "Every man setteth on first the good wine; and when *men* have drunk freely, then that which is worse: Thou hast kept the good wine until now." His astonishment found utterance in a common saying—a familiar adage descriptive of the ways of the world. The best is offered first; the worst is offered afterwards. The poorer quality is then less likely to be noticed and resented. The saying is quite a general one: it is therefore to be entirely detached from any unfavourable reference to the assembled guests. No hint, even of the most distant kind, is to be detected in it that the bounds of sobriety had been passed. "We may be quite sure that there was no such excess here; for to this the Lord would as little have given allowance by His presence, as He would have helped it forward by a special wonder-work of His own."[1]

A question has often been put, What of the enormous quantity of wine thus miraculously produced—a quantity extending far beyond the wants of the occasion?

of Cana no friend of the bridegroom, or 'groomsman,' is mentioned, while he *is* referred to in St. John iii. 29, where the words are spoken outside the boundaries of Galilee. For among the simpler and purer Galileans, the practice of having 'friends of the bridegroom,' which must often have led to gross impropriety, did not obtain, though all the invited guests bore the general name of 'children of the bride-chamber.'"

[1] Trench.

This question, however, may be met by the reasonable doubt as to whether such a large and so-called superfluous supply did actually exist. We read in ver. 9, "The servants which had drawn *the water* knew." It was then water which was drawn from the waterpots. The Evangelist still calls it water even after it had been drawn. Is it not implied, therefore, that it was only at a later stage — when the distribution took place—that it became wine? This seems a fair conclusion from the language employed. It follows then, if this view be accepted, that not all the water in the pitchers, but only that part of it which was drawn, underwent the mysterious change. What remained, being by far the larger part, was water still.[1]

If, however, we adhere to the usual and more accepted view, we can place this lavish freeness of the gift alongside of the similar abundance — even the superfluity — in the allied miracle of the loaves. "They filled twelve baskets with broken pieces from the five barley loaves, which remained over unto them that had eaten." While there is no waste, there is no stint in the Master's gifts.

Cana thus was first to witness the glory of Jesus; and His disciples, as they wondered, were established in their faith.

II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SIGN.

Ver. 11. "This beginning of His signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed on Him." The narrative which we have been expounding, notwithstanding its traits of

[1] *Vid.* article by Professor Stanley Leathes on this point in *The Expositor*, 1877, p. 304.

unusual beauty and interest, leaves upon the mind a feeling of perplexity and even of deep dissatisfaction. Why, we very naturally ask, such a display of power, in a case upon the whole so trivial and insignificant? The urgent need—the strong compassion—which in other cases called forth our Lord's intervention has no existence here. A failure in the wine-supply at a wedding festival was surely no great catastrophe, regarded even from a Jewish point of view. The wine, besides, could have been provided otherwise than by wonder-working power, even if its presence had been essential. We cannot feel satisfied with the superficial explanation that our Lord simply designed to show His friendly sympathy with the joyous company. No adequate reason can be found in such a suggestion. His inaugural miracle seems to demand a far more constraining motive. It is indeed a *sign*, an indication, or token, or pledge. The Evangelist conceives this work, wrought by the Divine Word in the visible world, as a shadowing forth of that which He does in the spiritual.[1] It is, therefore, a manifesto. But of what? The worker's glory—"glory as of the Only-begotten from the Father." "The outward sign was but a transparency through which the living glory gleamed"—the glory of the Eternal Son of the Eternal Father "full of grace and truth." But we have further to ask, What special aspects of that glory is the miracle designed to set forth? What special phases of the Messiah's kingdom does it depict? It is well known how Patristic Exposition has spiritualised all the minutiæ of the story.[2]

[1] Die sichtbare That (τὸ ἐπίγειον) spiegelt hier ein ἐπουράνιον ab, Scholten.

[2] This miracle, it is worthy of notice, stands alone in being assigned to an otherwise prominent day in the Church Calendar—January 6th. This same day, according to several Church Fathers, commemorates also

We must guard, however, against all such dangerous extravagance, remembering, at the same time, that the excess of this method of exposition does not necessarily invalidate the method itself. It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that in this act of power we have what may be called a parable of the kingdom of heaven.[1] That kingdom is portrayed as one of social happiness and joy. The miracle is wrought in connection with the sanctities of wedded life, and exhibits Him who wrought it as one with the Lord of Paradise, who, when He placed man there, blessed him, and said, "It is not good for man to be alone, let us make him a helpmate for him,"—one with that God and Father of all who "placeth the solitary in families," and who, in His redemptive work, is ever bringing nearer the one end, the gathering together of His children into the one great "household of faith." Beecher has well said: "Through the household as through a gate Jesus entered upon His ministry of love. Ever since, the Christian home has been the refuge of true religion. Here it has had its purest altars, its best teachers, and a life of self-denying love in all gladness, which is constituted a perpetual memorial of the nourishing love of God, and a symbol of the great mystery of sacrifice by which love perpetually lays down its life for others. The religion of the synagogue, of the temple, and of the church would have perished long ago but for the ministry of the household. It was fit

the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand. Both miracles are regarded as symbols of the Eucharist. This view is embodied in many ancient works of art—especially, in artistic representations on sarcophagi.

[1] In confirmation of this, it is worthy of notice that Hippolytus, in alluding to the miracle, has substituted for τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ the Matthæan form βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν. *Vid.* J. J. Tayler, *The Fourth Gospel*, p. 76.

that a ministry of love should begin at home. It was fit, too, that love should develop joy. Joyful love inspires self-denial, and keeps sorrow wholesome. Love civilises conscience, refines the passions, and restrains them. The bright and joyful opening of Christ's ministry has been generally lost sight of. The darkness of the last great tragedy has thrown back its shadow upon the morning hour of His life." It seems quite legitimate to learn this lesson from the fact that, as Fuller[1] puts it, "Our Lord showed the virginity of His miracles at a marriage." More especially does this appear when we bear in mind that the five disciples who witnessed it had all previously been disciples of the Baptist. They were thus deeply imbued, doubtless, by the spirit of his teaching. The life of the ascetic, in all probability, appeared to them the very ideal of a life of advanced holiness. The austere dweller in the desert, shunning the haunts of men, and emerging at times from his retreat to arouse men to a sense of sin and of the need of repentance, had left this impress upon their minds and hearts. But now that they had become followers of another Master, it was fitting, needful, that they should be taught that this lower and preparatory type of Old Testament piety, with its austerities, must give place to one of cheerful fellowship and joyfulness in the Lord. It was thus proclaimed that any separation between a life of holiness and a life of common daily duty can never be recognised; that, in a word, severity —the mood of the hermit spirit that dwells apart, is not sanctity,—

> "We need not bid, for cloistered cell,
> Our neighbour or our work farewell."

---

[1] *Holy War.*

But while lessons such as these lie in this inaugural miracle, they do not carry us to the central conception of it as a sign. We must find the kernel of the teaching in the clause "the water now become wine." We have confirmation of this in what the Evangelist afterwards says:[1] "He came therefore again unto Cana of Galilee, where He made the water wine." The point of view, therefore, which he occupies, and desires his readers to occupy, is not the marriage itself, not even the utterance of our Lord to Mary, but specially the work of transmutation. The surroundings and accessories of the incident retire into the background. We are thus confronted with this central idea, one that dominates the whole narrative—our Lord calling forth His power, not at the entreaty of others, but unsolicited, and as it were with the direct design of issuing an inaugural proclamation, to change the lower element into the higher, water into wine. We have not here, it is to be observed, a mere miraculous increase of what was wine. The work has no parallel with the Old Testament miracle, the increase or extension at Zarepta of the widow's meal in the barrel and oil in the cruse. Nor has it a parallel with the similar New Testament miracle, the multiplying of the few barley loaves and the fishes in the desert place. Here it is the quality rather than the quantity that is affected. The true parallel, although imperfect, is rather rightly to be found in that miracle of Moses—the transforming of the bitter Marah waters into the sweet. The true scope, therefore, of the significance of this sign is to be surveyed from this point, the transmuting, or transfiguring, of a common substance, however precious, into another—even a

[1] iv. 16

better and a nobler. We have in this way set before us the renewing and ennobling influences of Christ's kingdom; what, in other words, we understand by regeneration, conversion. This is no mere fancy or far-fetched thought. Its simple naturalness appears the more we consider the circumstances of the case. Let us try, for instance, as best we may, to realise the Evangelist's aim in selecting this incident for record. Lingering in Ephesus, the last of the apostolic band, just as the apostolic age is closing, he has been urgently entreated to indite this fourth Gospel to meet the special wants of the time,—wants arising now that the Church has fairly started on its career in the world, and has already gathered the experience of two generations as to its mission. Looking back through the long vista of these vanished years, he is recalling the most vivid events of a distant, yet ever memorable past. He is giving no continuous narrative, but simply a selection of incidents and teachings suitable to his immediate design. Hence, following upon that prologue, so simple in word, so profound in thought, he pens a few graphic, brief delineations of the early days of his Master's ministry. Amid these *first* things, there comes to him what indeed he could never have forgotten, the memory of this *first* sign. It flashes upon him with a new significance, at least a significance which it could hardly have had for him at the time it was wrought. Years were needed—even "the long results of time," to unfold its inner meaning. But all is clear now. The miracle, he now apprehends, was a manifesto, a symbol of the all-transforming power of his Master's truth. It was with this design that it was wrought. A great work as it was in the domain of the natural world, it was a picture of an infinitely greater

work in that of the spiritual—one wrought, not once for all, but ceaselessly going on, making all things new.

Now this exposition is entirely on the line of much that is recorded in the early part of this Gospel. A large part of its teaching gathers significantly around the one idea of change, renewal. For instance, we have the Forerunner's announcement, i. 16, 17—"Of His fulness we all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." That is to say, the old dispensation of grace has now passed; it has in Him of whom it testified, and for whose coming it prepared the way, become changed, transmuted into the higher, the infinitely better, the new dispensation of grace. In the light of this passage the first sign wrought by our Lord shines forth in its full significance. What was the first miracle wrought by Moses the servant of God? It was the turning of water into blood. He stretched out his rod, and the waters of Egypt—the streams, the rivers, the pools, became blood. There was "blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone." The divine intervention on behalf of the chosen people began in manifestation of judgment. Now, the divine intervention through Him who is a greater than Moses—the Fulfiller as well as the Giver of the law, begins by a gracious turning of water into wine. His ministry is thus declared to be one, not of death, but of life, and His kingdom to be one of eternal joy. It is also substantially the same thought that lies at the root of the incident of the temple-cleansing, narrated in this same chapter, ii. 13–17.

Further, as closely allied with this first sign, and standing very near it in its place in the Gospel, we must

link on to it the record of the midnight interview of our Lord with Nicodemus, the ruler of the Jews.[1] The subject-matter of that mysterious conversation is just what this miracle in symbol represents—the nature and necessity of the new birth—change in the individual heart—the renewal and ennobling of the whole nature. The text of both is simply this: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new;" or this other: "Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." Man's spiritual nature must undergo, not a single amendment in certain dispositions, but what may be called a miraculous metamorphosis — a change as wonderful in reality as that which passed over the water at the marriage feast. All this had actually come to pass in the personal experience of the disciples themselves who witnessed this work of power. Peter—that ardent, manly, resolute and yet wavering natural character of his—became at length changed, the same, yet another, now renewed into apostolic zeal. Nathanael—his simple, guileless, truthful disposition henceforth shining in a new nature, and in consecrated Christian service. John and James, the sons of Zebedee, at one time Boanerges, sons of thunder, in their discipleship became ardent, loving ministers of the gospel of love. So it has ever been. In every case where regeneration has become a reality, the saint may be recognised in the sinner. He is changed, another and yet the same. All the elements of the original natural disposition are not destroyed, but transfigured, henceforth manifesting Christ's glory, because glorified in fellowship with Him.

[1] John iii. 1–4.

What thus holds good of the individual, holds equally good of humanity as a whole. This aspect of the truth is set forth, not so distinctly indeed, but none the less really, in that other discourse of our Lord's recorded in chap. iv. 1–42 — the conversation with the Samaritan woman by Jacob's well at Sychar. Throughout it there runs the allusion, more or less evident in the several parts, to the changing, the renewing, the ennobling of the whole world by the gospel of His grace. The world-wide sphere of His mission—of His new kingdom—underlies it all. The first beginnings of this new spiritual creation, the Evangelist John had himself been privileged to see, before he wrote this Gospel. He had been able to trace the growing influence of the Church of Christ in every region of human existence. Human life in the nation, in the family, and in the individual, before his very eyes, had, as it were, been born again, —the water, in a word, had become wine—even the wine of the kingdom.

It is decidedly fanciful to carry the symbolisms of this incident further. It is indeed held by some that the ruler of the feast in this first miracle, like Caiaphas, the high priest, in reference to the last of this Gospel, was unconsciously prophesying. "Every man setteth on first the good wine; and when men have drunk freely, then that which is worse. Thou hast kept the good wine until now." This somewhat low-toned maxim of worldly wisdom, unworthy as it is, is regarded as having wrapt up in it, entirely concealed though it was from the speaker, and as yet unintelligible to the company, an allusion to the consummation of the Saviour's kingdom in glory. The giving of the world, and the giving of Him who

has overcome the world, are thus contrasted. His glory is that He reserves the best for the last. In the end of the days the beatitude receives its fulfilment, "Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb." It is improbable that this meaning is actually in the sign. Yet it is hardly possible to avoid noticing these three things. The first time our Lord sat at table with His disciples and friends, He turned water into wine, thus depicting the nature and blessedness of His kingdom. The last time He sat with them, before He went forth to suffer, He passed round the cup, and bade them drink it as a symbol of His shed blood, thus pointing out the need of personal, individual appropriation of the blessings of His kingdom. The final reference in Scripture to His fellowship with His disciples is this, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." Thus the joy of the marriage feast at Cana reaches forward in thought to the joy of heaven—

> "Where Jesus gives the portion
> Those blessed souls to fill,
> The insatiate, yet satisfied,
> The full, yet craving still."

We have seen that this first sign represents the glory of the Incarnate Word. He who created the universe has come to our world to manifest His glory in re-creating it for Himself. We have seen how this conception of the miracle is that which also appears in different forms in the isolated utterances, the discourses, and the incidents which in the Gospel cluster around it. These, while belonging to different times and circumstances in our Lord's ministry, seem all

purposely brought together by the Evangelist at the beginning of his Gospel to emphasise in all these varied ways this truth, Christ Jesus has come to change—to make all things new.

"His disciples believed on Him." They transferred, as is implied, their faith on to Him, henceforth and entirely. While genuine before, their allegiance now became confirmed and strong. Their spiritual advancement was "from faith to faith."

Such is the purpose of all Christ's signs. This purpose is reached only when they are reverently contemplated by the eye of the understanding and the heart.[1]

[1] Scholten, *Das Evangelium nach Joannes, Kritische historische Untersuchung*, is worthy of consultation regarding the spiritualising exposition of this miracle, p. 164 ff.

Dr. Paulus Cassel in his Monograph, already noticed, on the marriage at Cana, has much that is interesting, from an antiquarian point of view, about the representations of the miracle in early art and medieval legend. In the earliest art presentations, *e.g.* a picture at Mount Athos, the bridegroom appears as grey-headed. This has evidently arisen from some confusion of the Latin "canus," grey, with Cana. It is further remarkable that Joseph is usually introduced into the group; *e.g.* on an ivory carving of the fifth century. Our Lord, too, is depicted as touching the water-pot with His rod, as did Moses the rock.

In the Latin hymns of the Epiphany there are some striking allusions to this miracle, viz. Mone, *Hymni Latini Medii Ævi*, i. 75 ff.

II.

"Niemand wird ohne Leiden geadelt"

ROTHE, *Stille Stunden.*

THE HEALING OF THE COURTIER'S SON.

THE HEALING OF THE COURTIER'S SON.

(John iv. 43–54.)

I. THE EXPOSITION.

THIS miracle, the second in the record of the fourth Gospel, is regarded by Bishop Westcott as standing in a very close relation to the first. "The first two," he says, "give the fundamental character of the Gospel, its nature, and its condition; the next five are signs of the manifold working of Christ, as the restoration, the support, the guidance, the light, and the life of men; the last is the figure of all Christian labour to the end of time." While this arrangement, as to their significance, of the Johannean miracles is just, partial exception may be taken to it in so far as it concerns this one. It is not co-ordinate with the first. As we have sought to show, the first miracle, having an inaugural character, stands apart, symbolising the nature and blessings of the new kingdom, in which all things are changed and made new. "It is the gate Beautiful, by which the inquirer enters the sacred temple of divine truth. It is the illuminated initial which represents, in a pictorial form, the nature and design of the kingdom of heaven as revealed unto men."[1] The second miracle, so far from being closely associated with it, moves rather on the same level with the third. Though not as to locality or chronology, yet as to its place in the Gospel, and, above all, as to

[1] Dr. Macmillan.

its inner significance, the second and third miracles are associated in the writer's mind, and are presented to the reader as depicting different aspects of one great central doctrine. The one chiefly teaches that faith is essential to the reception of Messianic blessing; and the other, as we shall afterwards see, that the Messianic blessing itself consists in forgiveness of sin. The two leading ideas in this pair of signs—the healing of the courtier's son, and the healing of the infirm man at the pool of Bethesda—are, in short, faith and forgiveness. The higher blessings of the dispensation of grace are present in the individual soul when faith is exercised and forgiveness received. The kingdom is without us, if these be not realised within us. The probability, if not indeed the entire justification, of this view will appear as we proceed.

"And after two days He went forth from thence into Galilee." This statement throws us back upon ver. 3, where we learn that our Lord, on leaving Judæa, "departed again into Galilee." He resumed, that is to say, the journey which had been interrupted by the incident in Samaria.[1] Moved by the Samaritans' earnest entreaty, He had tarried with them for two days, unfolding in growing measure the mysteries already disclosed to the woman at Jacob's well. Now, however, in accordance with His original intention, He directly repairs to Galilee. His visit to Samaria was but an interlude. A reason is assigned for this return to Galilee—"For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet hath no honour in his own country." Quite a thicket of confused opinions has grown up around this state-

[1] Hengstenberg calls attention to the fact that ἀπῆλθεν is a common word with John. It is used in this Gospel and the Apocalypse more frequently than in any other New Testament books.

ment. So far as our purpose is concerned, we are not called upon to attempt its disentanglement. It is sufficient to say that "for" cannot with aught of reason be transformed into "but" or "although." We cannot evade a difficulty by doing any linguistic violence of this kind. Nor is it a view which commends itself, that Judæa is specified by "His own country." Trench combats this well by saying: "Our Lord's birth at Bethlehem of Judæa was not generally known, and therefore the slight esteem in which He was there held could not have had this for its ground." Besides, the incidental birthplace cannot be πατρίς—His own country. The word rather means the place where a man has been brought up, and that, too, not so much a district as a town.[1] Now it is Nazareth that was our Lord's own particular town. He is styled the Prophet of Nazareth over and over again. Upon the whole, then, the solution of the difficulty seems to be this. Our Lord repaired to the district of Galilee, but, otherwise than might have been expected, He avoided Nazareth, His original home in Galilee. It had proved itself unworthy to receive Him. In its previous treatment of Him, He Himself (αὐτός) had found the adage to be true, "A prophet hath no honour in his own country." His disciples often afterwards testified to the same experience. Hence Cana was preferred to Nazareth.[2]

[1] A good case has been made out by Köster in *Stud. und Krit.* 1862, p. 349, for the view that πατρίς in New Testament usage always means native town (Vaterstadt) rather than native country. What has misled commentators is confounding πατρίς with the Latin *patria*. Even in the use of the word in Heb. xi. 14 it is the idea of πόλις that is prominent.

[2] For other explanations, *vid.* Hofmann's *Schriftbeweis*, ii. 170, and Keil's *Commentary*. Schenkel, in his *Charakterbild Jesu*, only shows the absurdities into which rationalistic exegesis is so prone to fall, when he

But, turning to the world-worn adage itself, we find that it, too, is not without its difficulty. Like most sayings of its class, it is the embodiment of a wide—a general experience—

> "The people's voice the voice of God we call;
> And what are proverbs but the people's voice,
> Coined first, and current made by common choice?
> Then sure they must have weight and truth with all." [1]

But how can this people's-voice apply to the experience of Christ? There are, it is true, obvious reasons why, as a rule, a public teacher fails to find favour where he has been earliest known. The sins and shortcomings of youth, though long ago condoned, are not entirely forgotten. They are still a living force tending to lessen reverence and esteem. It is perfectly easy to understand how this is so in the case of all ordinary teachers of their fellow-men. But it is not easy to understand it in regard to Him who is the one perfect Teacher—to Him of whose youth we read that He grew "in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man"—to Him who in every act of His life "did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." Surely there could be no spot where men would accord Him a more hearty welcome than "His own country." But no: in His case it was the perfection, not the imperfection, of His character and conduct which gave the proverb its significance. The early meanness of His surroundings obscured in later days all else in the eye of His critical countrymen. The Son of Joseph and Mary; they could not get over that. "Words of grace" to fall from His lips—a call to repentance to

says that our Lord's use of the word "prophet" here proves that He did not yet recognise and announce Himself as the Messiah.

[1] *Vid.* Trench on *Proverbs*, p. 14.

come from Him to them, was more than they could brook. One who for thirty years had borne with them the burden of daily anxiety and want and toil—they could not take Him as their director in the way of holiness. Hence their alienation from Him. His claims, all the more that they were enforced by the stainless beauty of His life, were an offence to them. They knew not this great mystery of godliness, that it is just because the Son of God is one with men themselves that He is a deliverer strong to save. Here, then, in the recognised attitude of Nazareth towards Himself, our Lord had a foretaste of what in reality awaited Him at the hands of the whole people of Israel. "He came unto His own, and they that were His own received Him not."

It was in such circumstances as these that, avoiding the familiar home of His youth, He repaired to the other parts of Galilee, and "the Galileans received Him." They cordially welcomed and honoured Him.[1] In this northern province men were less under the influence of the ruling party in Jerusalem. Having frequent friendly relations also with the surrounding Gentiles, they were less enthralled by Jewish prejudice. In their simpler modes of life, too, as husbandmen and fishermen, they had more of that childlike docility which with readiness recognises and accepts the truth. Hence in some degree their favourable reception of our Lord. But a more specific reason is assigned. "The Galileans received Him, having seen all things that He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they also went unto the feast." Many Galilean residents, who had been in the path of duty in Jerusalem, had been also in the

[1] Compare δεκτός in the parallel passage, Luke iv. 24, signifying "held in esteem."

path of privilege. They had enjoyed opportunities of seeing and hearing the new Teacher, and noticing the widespread interest in Himself which He had awakened throughout the capital. On their return, they could not fail to talk much about Him. Hence, when He around whom general interest had gathered appeared in person, He was at once hailed with excited curiosity and eager expectation. They "received Him," and, in this friendly attitude of their hearts, some received "power to become sons of God."[1]

"He came therefore again into Cana of Galilee, where He made the water wine." The dwelling, within whose friendly walls, amid the joys of the marriage-festival, He had first "manifested His glory," doubtless again received Him. He was a welcomed guest where before He had been an invited guest—both He and His disciples. While abiding there, His presence became widely known. "And here we come upon one of those striking scenes of which we see so many during His career—pictures they seem, rather than histories. Out of the nameless crowd some striking figure emerges —a ruler, a centurion, a maniac, a foreign woman. Under the eye of Christ these personages glow for a moment with intense individuality and then sink back into obscurity. No history precedes them; no after-account of them is given. Like the pictures which the magic lantern throws upon the screen, they seem to come from the air and to melt again into nothing; and yet, while they remain, every line is distinct, and every colour intense."[2] Such an instance we have here. The incident is not to be identified with that recorded in Matt. viii. 5–13; Luke vii. 1–10. From Irenæus downwards, it has been common thus to confound this

[1] i. 12.

[2] Beecher, *Life of Christ.*

courtier's son with the centurion's servant. Even such commentators as Sanday and Weiss have accepted this view. But the points of difference between the two records are, as Bishop Westcott has shown, far too numerous and manifest to lend it aught of probability. They may at once, indeed, be declared entirely irreconcilable. While there are considerable and even somewhat striking points of contact, it cannot be overlooked that in the present case the prominent figure is a high official of Herod's household, and almost certainly a Jew, not a heathen centurion of Rome—that intercession is on behalf of a son, not a slave—that Cana is the locality specified, not Capernaum—that the intercession is directly made to Jesus, not through the good offices of the Jewish elders—that the petitioner entreats Christ to come to his house, instead of expressly declaring himself unworthy of such honour—that the malady for which the cure is sought is a fever, not paralysis—that the whole incident is illustrative of a strong faith, not of a weak. Such is a summary of the arguments for regarding this miracle as standing distinct from the other.

The petitioner is called a nobleman, or king's officer. The word is indefinite. It may possibly even depict one of royal blood. It is more probable, however, that it designates an officer, either civil or military, in the Court of Herod Antipas — one, consequently, of the royalist party, a prominent figure in the Herodian faction —a Jew too, as has been said, for he is included in the "ye" of ver. 48; and it was the direct interest of Herod, as also his practice, to select high-born Jews as his courtiers. It has been imagined, with what amount of likelihood it is impossible to decide, that this officer may be identified with Chusa, Herod's steward,[1] whose

[1] Luke viii. 3, 53.

wife Joanna was afterwards among those who ministered to Christ of their substance. If so, we may reasonably suppose that this ministry of hers was the manifestation of her gratitude for the restoration of her child. Manaen, the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch,[1] has also been claimed as the courtier of our text.

This man's son—his only son and heir[2]—was sick. The sickness was febrile.[3] "The close heat of the borders of the lake of Galilee, with their fringe of reeds and marsh, though then tempered by the shade of countless orchards and wooded clumps, now wholly wanting, has in all ages induced a prevalence of fever at certain seasons."[4] This plague of Capernaum had brought the stricken one to "the point of death." The father had learned of the Saviour's arrival in Cana. He knew also of the fame which had followed the new Teacher from Judæa, and doubtless he was acquainted with the first sign which Cana had already witnessed. It was this knowledge, now touched with the emotion of anxiety, which brought him to the feet of Christ, "praying swift succour for a dying child." "He went unto Him, and besought Him that He would come down and heal his son."

The answer is one of stern severity and reproof—"Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will in no wise believe." "Signs and wonders,"—the phrase is not infrequent in the Old Testament, or even in the New. It is also quite familiar to classical usage. But in John's writings it stands here alone. It means works which in their teaching are full of significance, and in their manifestation are full of marvel, and in

[1] Acts xiii. 1.
[2] "Ut articulus videtur inferre," Bengel.
[3] Ver. 52.
[4] Geikie, i. 536.

both are beyond the range of common experience.[1] Unspiritual men must have these outward things to force their faith, and faith thus forced is little worth. It is with something almost of bitterness that our Lord by this utterance contrasts the favoured Galileans with many of the despised Samaritans who simply "believe because of His word."[2] There may also be implied a tacit reflection on the Court of Herod to which the petitioner belonged. That Court was, we know, characterised by an exaggerated and perverted taste for wonder-works, but was entirely unreceptive as to spiritual influence. We learn[3] that Herod "was desirous to see Jesus of a long season, because he had heard many things of Him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done of Him." His attendants also were chargeable with this same spirit of idle curiosity about signs. They had listened to the Baptist with some amount of reverence, but ultimately when he "did no miracle"—showed no sign, they rejected him, and he was slain. This hardness of heart, which craved for wonders, refused to be touched by the mere enunciation of truth. While in thus testing the courtier who earnestly

[1] *Vid.* Wickelhaus, *in loc.* Godet says: "There is some bitterness in the accumulation of the two terms. The first describes miracles in the relation to the facts of the invisible world which they manifest; the second characterises them in relation to external nature, whose laws they defy. The latter term thus brings out forcibly the external character of the supernatural manifestation. The meaning, therefore, is: 'You must have signs; and, moreover, you are not satisfied unless those signs have the character of wonders.'" Bishop Westcott says: "The two words mark the two chief aspects of miracles; the spiritual aspect, whereby they suggest some deeper truth than meets the eye, of which they are in some sense symbols and pledges; and the external aspect, whereby their strangeness arrests attention. 'Sign' and 'work' are characteristic words for miracles in St. John. The word here translated 'wonders' is never used by itself in the New Testament."

[2] Ver. 41.

[3] Luke xxiii. 8; John x. 41.

petitions Him,[1] our Lord was rebuking this unreasonable and unreceptive spirit, He is in no sense to be regarded as disparaging miracles themselves as an evidence and proof of His Messiahship. They have their own place in the rank of evidence. He Himself made frequent allusions to them as His credentials—"The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me." They have therefore a value for every age. "As the Christian rises to a clearer perception of their distinctness and harmony, as he traces their simplicity and depth, as he sees their comprehensive variety and infinite significance, they become an evidence of his faith — an evidence of power and wisdom—which issues, not in the silence of repressed doubt, but in the thanksgiving of grateful praise."[2]

But while reproof lurked in the Saviour's reply to the courtier's prayer, there was also displayed in it tender and loving encouragement. Just as in the first miracle, so in this, the second, something of gentle remonstrance and rebuke simply precedes and prepares for the gracious manifestation of power. It was in no tempting spirit, like that of the Pharisees, that the anxious parent had sought a sign, if indeed personally he had sought it at all: it was rather in the feebleness of his new-born faith. Hence help is near. The thought of impending bereavement gives wings to his prayer. He has no time to analyse and explain his state of mind. The cry of his heart simply finds utterance in the words—words almost of command, "Sir, come down ere my child die"—my little child—in the original diminutive form of the word there is endearment, as

[1] "He who came to complain of his son's sickness, hears of his own," Bishop Hall.

[2] Bishop Westcott on *Characteristics of the Gospel Miracles*, p. 7.

in Jairus' similar word—"my little daughter." "Come *down;*" Capernaum, situated on the shore, was on a lower level than Cana. In this case it was "human sorrow that was the birth-pang of faith." But the faith was as yet weak—"Ere my child *die.*" The Master's bodily presence he regards as needful for the exercise of His power. Like Martha and Mary at Bethany, the courtier was very far from conceiving that any help could avail if once the spirit had left the tenement of clay. Yet his faith being true, however feeble, is met promptly with the decisive assurance, "Go thy way; thy son liveth." The adage, "*Bis dat qui cito dat,*" was here signally verified. Our Lord gave beyond what was asked. The long distance of five and twenty miles is annihilated so far as His healing power is concerned. He but spake and it was done. The assurance, so full of repose and power, gave strength to the father's faith. No sign was needed any longer; "the man believed the word that Jesus spake unto him, and he went his way." His reliance on the spoken word evinced itself in his leisurely return. It was the following day ere he reached his home—using his own animals, instead of hiring others in his haste.[1] But all the time he carried music in his heart. Its refrain was ever this, "Thy son liveth." At length the responsive echo of the bondservants from the sick-room of Capernaum is heard, the announcement that the child lived. But this confirmatory message exceeded even his highest expectations. Apparently looking only for improvement, it may be, even a tedious recovery, "he inquired of them the hour when he *began* to amend."[2] But the answer brushes all

[1] So Webster and Wilkinson.

[2] κομψότερον ἔσχεν; Latin, *belle habere;* German, *feiner hübscher. Et*

fear away—"Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him." Left; it had suddenly and completely gone. It had gone, too, at the very moment that the word had fallen from the Healer's lips. The seventh hour: if this be one o'clock afternoon, as many hold, then the cure is all the more wonderful, effected, as it was, in the time of the glowing heat of day. Thus the father found a restored child, and the child found a better, because a believing father—"Himself believed, and his whole house"—the members of the household in the widest sense—the many dependants of a courtier high in rank. There was light in that dwelling.

The Evangelist is careful to note that "this is again the second sign that Jesus did, having come out of Judæa into Galilee."[1] "Again" and "the second;" the language is peculiar. It seems to signify the second sign in Galilee which John records,[2] the third being the Feeding of the five thousand in the desert place. Thus in this threefold manifestation of His power did our Lord vouchsafe to all sincere truth-seekers in Galilee the signs of His Messiahship and of the blessings of His kingdom.

II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SIGN.

At once setting aside the many fantastic meanings sometimes assigned to the subsidiary parts of this narrative, we none the less feel that it is set before us, as a whole, as a manifesto, like the others, of the kingdom—the kingdom of heaven brought near to men.

befindet sich hübsch. It is the *amœnum verbum* of a father's choice, tenderly yet fearingly expressing his intense anxiety.

[1] πάλιν belongs to ἐποίησεν. It is a favourite word with John.

[2] Wickelhaus.

Its teaching all gathers around the central idea, that the blessings of this kingdom, symbolised in the first miracle, can be realised in the individual experience only by a living faith. Faith makes these blessings a reality in each personal experience. For instance, we are very forcibly taught by this incident how the dealings of Divine Providence lead a man to faith. In this case the leading was that of domestic affliction. "Das Haus-kreuz soll zu Jesu treiben."[1] In other and happier circumstances this courtier would possibly never have given more than a passing thought to the new Teacher about whom he had heard so much. Perhaps, had he come into contact with Him, he might, for the whiling away of a spare moment, have lent Him an ear—a fashionable man of the world listening to some wandering magician. "But sorrow makes men sincere, and anguish makes them earnest."[2] In the hour of overmastering anxiety the haughtiest heart will become humble. So it was here. Though as yet he knew it not, the hand of affliction laid upon his son was for the nobleman the guiding hand of divine grace leading him to peace in believing. So it often is. There are many rejoicing in the Church on earth and in the Church in heaven, inasmuch as suffering, personal or relative, has been the means of bringing them to salvation,—many of whom it can be said, "Lord, in trouble have they visited Thee; they poured out a prayer when Thy chastening was upon them."[3] There are many parents' hearts, which "heaved moaning as the ocean," that have been brought near to the great heart of the heavenly Father through children's sufferings. Of all such it may be said that "a little child has led them"—led them on

[1] Hahn. [2] Beecher's *Life of Christ*. [3] Isa. xxii. 16.

the way to the heavenly home. Grief to all such at last proves itself as "but joy misunderstood."

Once more, the incident—associated not like the first sign, with household joy, but with household sorrow—teaches us the blessedness of household fellowship in the faith. The narrative is invested with peculiar interest as giving us the first direct mention of family-faith. We meet with frequent references to it later; but this stands first. In the nature of things it could not stand long alone, for faith is a holy flame which kindles whatever it approaches.[1] So soon as individual adherents of the new cause multiplied, whole households, as here, could not fail to be gathered into the one household of faith. Hence throughout the ages the home circle, which is also a Christian circle, has ever been the best guardian and nurse of the truth—the region where Christ Jesus loves to be honoured and obeyed. It has been well said, "What the single banyan pillar stem is to the pillared and multitudinous banyan tree, such is the family to the nation."[2] The figure may be applied with yet greater propriety and stronger force to the Church of the living God.

But the prominent, the central aspect of faith which this miracle or sign presents is this—faith in its growth, its steady progress, its stages from weakness unto strength in the individual soul. This is woven into the very texture of the whole narrative. Bede[3] says: "There are degrees in faith as in other virtues: the nobleman's faith began when he came to Christ. It increased when our Lord said, 'Thy son liveth.' It

[1] "Glaube ist eine Flamme Gottes, die entzündet was in ihre Nähe kommt," Rothe.

[2] Dr. Rigg, *Anglican Theology*, p. 233.

[3] Quoted by Wordsworth.

was completed when his servants told him, 'Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.'" Dr. Richard Rothe[1] calls these stages the preparatory, the elementary, and the high schools of saving faith. Setting out on his journey, the nobleman had a faith that was hardly conscious as yet of its own existence. His musings by the way may have been somewhat of this kind—This is all vain—the sick-bed of my child claims my presence—my proper post is there, and not on this fool's errand—what help can I expect from such a quarter as that to which I am going to apply? the man whose aid I seek is an impostor, or, at best, a fanatic, whose followers are sounding abroad the praises which he himself disclaims. But then this thought is borne in upon him—What if, after all, this Jesus be the Christ, the long expected Deliverer. If He can help, then my belief will be all His own. Thus can we imagine him swaying between doubt and hope. His soul is in conflict, but the conflict is towards the light. At all events the boy's recovery was to be the chosen sign. He needed that staff on which to lean. But the need of it, imperfect as it was, was not felt for long. Feeble faith, once in presence of the Saviour, advances in strength, because He graciously meets and aids it. It gets strength, too, "despite the plucking fiend," by finding voice in prayer. Then, when prayer is answered, faith is confirmed, and its peace is shed abroad in the heart. The fevered heart of the father is healed, as well as the fevered body of the son. "Full assurance of faith" comes at last to be possessed. All these stages are true to the experience of earnest seeking souls. "There are doubts which evil spirits darken with their wings." It is action alone, suggested

[1] *Predigten*, i. 94.

by the amount of faith we may already have, that can put these doubts to flight. Yet there is ever room, at whatever stage we may individually stand, to cry, "Lord, increase our faith." This faith is needful if we would have renewal—the changing from glory to glory, till at the marriage supper of the Lamb we say, "Thou hast kept the good wine till now."

We thus learn that the leading idea in this, the first of this pair of signs, is the blessings of our Lord's kingdom, as realised in the individual soul by faith.

III.

"Deformed, transformed, reformed, informed, conformed."
BROWNING, *The Ring and the Book*.

THE HEALING OF THE IMPOTENT MAN AT BETHESDA.

THE HEALING OF THE IMPOTENT MAN AT BETHESDA.

(John v. 1–18.)

I. THE EXPOSITION.

WITH this chapter we enter upon an entirely new section of the fourth Gospel — a section that depicts a new phase of our Lord's work and teaching, and especially the relation in which His ministry stood to the unbelieving spirit of the Pharisees. "After these things:" the words are a common formula of transition. They imply that a gap in the narrative is to be understood—a considerable interval of time between the incidents already recorded and those to which attention is now to be turned.[1] Our Lord now appears in Jerusalem. The city of the Great King is visited by the King Himself. But the event associated with this visit is but an illustration of what the Evangelist at the beginning of the Gospel had declared—"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." "There was a feast of the Jews." What feast? — the Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles, Consecration of the Temple, or Purim? The point, though of great importance in its bearing upon the chronology of the Gospel history, is of little practical interest, and, indeed, is one that apparently cannot be

[1] This is the significance, as Lücke was first to suggest, of μετὰ ταῦτα. The singular, μετὰ τοῦτο, implies immediate sequence. Luke uses the same formula, but not nearly so often.

decided. "Let us be content with the learned ignorance of what God hath concealed; and know that what He hath concealed will not avail us to know."[1] The arguments, however, seem to point most to the Feast of Purim or Lots. This annual festival commemorated the preservation of the Jews in Persia from the massacre threatened them through the truculence and cunning of Haman.[2] This festival, indeed, was not strictly a religious one, but it had its own elements of good. It was a celebration of the covenant-God's providential care over the nation, and an acknowledgment of the nation's gratitude. Hence there is nothing strange in supposing our Lord's honouring it by His presence and observance. He would thus, as "a son of the commandment," show Himself in true sympathy with the feelings and usages of His people and country. This was a feast, further, in which the poor and the afflicted were specially remembered and cared for, and therefore it was a fitting, a peculiarly appropriate occasion for the miraculous healing at the pool of Bethesda.[3] As has been said, however, the true identification of this feast is impossible. "Jesus went up to Jerusalem." It was a short and rapid visit. He sought the city at the time when it was most thronged, and when, consequently, it was most likely to yield the best opportunity for the doing of His Father's work.

"Now there is in Jerusalem by the sheep *gate* a pool, which is called in Hebrew Bethesda, having five porches." In this verse, as well as in the first, there is ample room for discussion. "If either you or myself knew not how to be rid of time, we might easily wear

[1] Bishop Hall's *Contemplations*. [2] Esther ix.
[3] *Vid.* Bishop Ellicott's *Lectures on the Life of Christ*, pp. 134–138.

out as many hours in this pool as this poor impotent man did years. But it is edification that we affect, and not curiosity." So said Bishop Hall, somewhat quaintly, in discoursing on this miracle before King James and his Court. We may make his utterance precisely our own. The site of this pool it is as impossible to identify as is the name of the feast with which it is connected. The "is" is no evidence that this Gospel was written before the destruction of the city. It simply represents the vivid recollection of the writer; and it may further be contended that a pool, being natural more than artificial, would survive the overthrow of the porches erected around it. Bethesda—the best supported reading—means House of Compassion. The pool or plunging bath may have received the name from the medicinal nature of the water, or more probably, from the porches or colonnade for the use of suffering humanity which public beneficence had erected. Thomas Fuller says here: "The mercy of God was seconded by the charity of man; God gave the cure, men built the harbour for impotent persons."[1] The ghauts of the Hindoos at the present day are structures of a very similar character with these Bethesda porches. "In these lay a multitude of them that were sick, blind, halt, withered." What follows to the end of the fourth verse must be expunged. A very general consent of experts declares the words to be nothing more than an early gloss upon the narrative.[2] The insertion of the legend of the angelic moving of the waters may readily be

[1] *Holy War*, Book I. chap. xxiii. Bishop Hall uses these words of Fuller's without acknowledgment.

[2] *Vid.* Sanday, *Authorship and Historical Character of the Fourth Gospel*, p. 104.

explained as aiming at filling up what at first seems a gap in the record. The unwarranted addition, however, is fitted to remind us of what in this age many so vehemently ignore, that the virtues and energies of the material universe are not the result of mere dead natural laws. Behind these laws God is ever working, either immediately or by His angelic ministrants, who fulfil His will. These may be present, though unseen—and in this spurious passage it is not said that the angel was visible, though his power was felt.[1] Ignoring, however, this acknowledged interpolation, we have simply to conceive a pool of water, having, or supposed to have, certain medicinal mineral properties—and a group of sufferers who had resorted thither. Any English or German Spa presents substantially the same scene. Here were men afflicted by various bodily maladies seeking relief, — hoping, in many cases, against hope, that within the hallowed precincts of Jerusalem, and in the pool, to which many cures had been ascribed, they might find "surcease of sorrow." Why did our Lord, it has been asked, repair to such a melancholy spot? The answer surely is not far to seek. He who is "the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," where else would we expect to find Him? "As one longs to escape from the stifling atmosphere of a scene of worldly pomp, with its glitter and unreality, into the clearness of the evening air, so our Lord may have longed to pass from the glitter and unreality of those who held rule in the temple, or who occupied the seat of Moses in their academies, to what was the atmosphere of His life on earth, His real work, among that suffering,

[1] *Vid.* Hofmann, *Schriftbeweis*, i. 326, and especially Maurice *in loc.*, who defends the passage.

ignorant multitude, which in its sorrow raised a piteous longing cry for help, where it had been misdirected to seek it."[1] Out of the company of crippled wretches, lying on their pallets or rugs, and in Eastern fashion expressing their woes in their wailings, our Lord selects one, and one only. Why He does so we cannot tell. Just as, while He must have seen many funeral processions, the mourners going about the streets, He raised only the widow's son at the gates of Nain as He touched the bier, so in this case one is singled out from his fellows for healing—only one, some moral reason doubtless justifying the choice. "A certain man was there, which had been thirty and eight years in his infirmity." We are not to understand that the man was thirty-eight years of age, and that consequently his nervous prostration or paralysis was congenital. No, his disease, as is afterwards implied, was the penalty of his sin. It was his malady, therefore, that was of this long duration. His life had been much longer still. He was a conspicuous figure among his "companions in tribulation"—possibly not only for the length of his suffering, but also for the greatness of his sin. But the crisis which was to issue in the double cure was near. "Wouldest thou be made whole?" The question thus addressed to him appears at first sight a very needless one. The answer might well have been taken for granted. The man's extremity, as well as his presence there, amply testified to his desire, his yearning after healing. Even supposing that his immediate purpose was to gain alms by the display of his disease, and so to make a sorry livelihood out of his misery, the desire for restored health, while it may have been dormant

[1] Edersheim, i. 464.

within his breast, could not in any sense have been dead. The Divine Healer "knew that he had been now a long time *in that case.*" We have here one of the many instances in which this Evangelist reveals the motive of his Master's actions. He thus, as the bosom disciple, — the ἐπιστήθιος, — shows himself thoroughly familiar with the thoughts and aims of his Lord.[1] And it was this knowledge that prompted the inquiry. "He knew what was in man." He "could thoughts unveil e'en in their dumb cradle." His question, therefore, had the design of turning the man's thoughts in upon himself, and so leading him up through awakened interest to a certain measure of receptive faith. For we have to observe that as yet this faith does not appear to have had any existence. The man is not in that attitude of curiosity and hopeful expectancy which the nobleman of the preceding miracle assumed. He has asked nothing. He has no glimmering even of hope as he lies helpless in the presence of the unknown and sympathetic visitor. He is looking rather, in so far as he anticipates anything at all, to others. "Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled,"—it was therefore an intermittent spring,— "to put me into the pool; but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me." The sanative virtues of the pool, when it became active, disappeared very quickly. "It would seem," besides, "that the space covered by its activity was only large enough to contain one person at a time."[2] Hence the poor cripple who stood most in need of help was the least likely to receive it. The greater activity, if not the greater energy, of the others always forestalled him. The

[1] *Vid.* iv. 1, vi. 6, 15, 61, ix. 35, and many other passages.

[2] Sanday, p. 105.

rapid action needful to throw him in, as the word implies, he could not command. His, then, was the spirit of entire despondency—the resignation of gathering despair. He was without friendly aid to take him down the narrow descent. He was possibly also shunned, being regarded as a sinner above others, only receiving the due reward of his deeds. He as yet, above all, was poor in this, that he knew not the help that was to be found in Him who is Son of God and Son of Man.

All, however, was soon to be changed. The question, in its tones of compassion and in its accompanying look of pity, awoke within his seared heart the first right consciousness of sin and the recognition of offered mercy. Hope dawned within him like a summer's morn. Thus the command came to him in authority and power, "Arise, take up thy bed, and walk." Thereupon rolling up and carrying the pallet or sleeping mat which had so long carried himself, "straightway the man was made whole." His was restoration immediate and complete and visible.

"Now it was the Sabbath on that day." It was indeed a Sabbath work that had been done by Christ Jesus; and it was no violation of Sabbath sanctity that He had enjoined. Not so, however, thought "the Jews"—the expression in John's usage means Christ's enemies, the Jewish authorities. They were offended. Appointed guardians of the public morals, they were not so much rightly zealous for the law itself as overzealous for its mere letter. They had overlaid its precepts with countless explanations and additions, and these they defended with all the fanaticism of ecclesiastical pedantry and pride. The Sabbath had thus in their hands become a day of bitter bondage. Many of

the irksome prohibitions as to Sabbath work had reference to the carrying of burdens. Even a staff was regarded as an unlawful burden for even a blind man to carry. It is said that so much of this trivial absurdity still remains, that there are strict modern German Jews who throw aside their staffs on the seventh day of the week. It is easy to understand, then, how the healed cripple in this case, openly carrying his rug under his arm, was a cause of grievous offence. The authorities were, or professed to be, scandalised at his conduct. He, as well as his Healer, had been guilty, they held, of an ostentatious contravention of Sabbath law. But, in reply to all remonstrance or rebuke, he can only emphatically declare, "He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk." He knows nothing as to the right or wrong of the matter. "Hair-splitting distinctions" as to the lawful and the unlawful are in no way in his line. It is enough for him that He, whose work was one of power, has also a word full of authority. On this simple assurance he rests in peace. His benefactor's direction cannot be one that is wrong.

But Jewish malice, now thoroughly roused, went much further than mere murmuring and complaining. "They asked him, Who is the man that said unto thee, Take up *thy bed*, and walk?" The question in the form in which it is put is designedly scornful. Malignity, too, lurked under its pretended innocency.[1] They did not ask to know, for they knew already. The whole city, indeed, was by this time ringing with Christ's fame, and it was precisely this that accounted for the gathering hostility against Him.

[1] "Quærunt non quid mirentur, sed quid calumnientur," Grotius.

But the man himself was as yet in ignorance. The seclusion caused by his paralysis, and possibly by his sin, may account for this. His hermit-spirit dwelt apart. Besides, it was only for a passing moment that his eye had rested upon his helper and friend, and in the tumultuous excitement of his joy his mental faculties may naturally have suffered from confusion, all the more "for Jesus had conveyed Himself away, a multitude being in the place." This, in fact, is the explanation of the man's ignorance which the Evangelist gives. He could not point out his deliverer, because, as a strong swimmer, He had glided out of notice, passing through the surging waves of the crowd (ἐξένευσε).

Not only do we learn that our Lord withdrew Himself from the gaze of idle curiosity, we find also that the healed man did the same. Avoiding what he knew would await him, the keen inquiry and the scornful enmity of those in authority, he repaired to the temple. The house of God rather than the market-place was the spot in true accord with his newly-found thankfulness and joy. He was there, we may surely conjecture, devoutly giving God the glory. Like the cripple whom Peter and John afterwards healed in their Master's name at the Beautiful Gate, he was found "entering into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God." But, however much we may ascribe to him a thankful, a worshipping spirit, it is clear that he stood in need of a word of caution and exhortation. And this, at length, is graciously vouchsafed. "Afterward," at a later part of the same day, we may suppose, "Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing befall thee."

Bodily restoration is here assigned by the Saviour Himself as a reason, a motive, for renewal of the soul. See to it that there be henceforth a quitting of sin, now that the body, which had been the instrument of sin, is made whole. And there is added the threatening in loving-kindness—the warning against the worse thing; not a more pronounced development of his malady, but the living paralysis and death of the soul. The man's conscience is touched. His ailment had in some way been the outcome of his transgression. He acknowledges this, and in doing so receives a double cure. Body and soul are alike healed by "the Good Physician." He no longer uses the freedom restored "for an occasion to the flesh."

The man, healed, and now converted, having learned who his friend and deliverer was, "went away, and told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole." It is entirely wrong to suppose (as Schleiermacher, Wickelhaus, and others do) that, irritated by the words of gracious severity just addressed to him, and still clinging to his self-righteousness, he acted thus out of malice. It is wrong also to see in this procedure of his merely an unquestioning obedience to the authorities whom he had always regarded with reverence. What he did, he did out of his overflowing gratitude and joy. So far from denouncing his benefactor, he was lovingly trying to spread abroad His fame. He could not doubt, whatever his first impressions had been about them, that the Jews, like himself, would be won to the side of this new Teacher and Wonder-worker. Mistaken then he was, but he was not blameworthy. He did not understand the hardness of these cold official hearts. These purists—false guardians and corrupt expositors of God's law—

preferred their own formal, lifeless traditions to all spiritual good. "For this cause did they persecute Jesus, because He did these things on the Sabbath." Here, then, we see their enmity now openly aroused. Henceforth it slept not. It at last found utterance in the cries: "Crucify Him, crucify Him — not this man, but Barabbas—His blood be on us and on our children!" The historical significance of this sign, therefore, is this, that, along with the crowning sign, the raising of Lazarus from the tomb, it was the direct occasion of our Lord's persecution and death.

II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SIGN.

As in other cases, so here, and perhaps especially here, it is vain to adduce and appraise all the vagaries of Patristic and even Protestant expositions of this miracle. The allegorical treatment of it is indeed strangely attractive, but just on that account it is dangerously seductive. It has been held that the pool symbolises the Jewish religion—the man, the Jewish people—the thirty-eight years of his suffering, the thirty-eight years of Israel's punishment in the wilderness—the healing only of one man, the restricting of Old Testament blessing to the one chosen nation—the stirring of the waters, the coming of Christ Jesus and the consequent perturbation of the Jewish people. These are samples—there are many others—of the puerile conceits into which even pious Bible-study may readily fall. It is interesting in this same connection, too, to notice the frequency with which this Gospel incident appears in liturgical paintings of the Roman catacombs. Its design is apparently to

power has come—walk before God with new hopes, new happiness, new spiritual activities and aims, and ever listening to their Saviour's voice, "Go, sin no more." This exposition is borne out by almost all the teaching which follows in this chapter. The quickening energy of Christ Jesus is that which He Himself proceeds to expound. He is the awakener and strengthener of morally helpless humanity. The next pair of signs open up for us a new aspect of the Saviour's work and kingdom. It depicts the relation in which He stands, not to the individual soul, but to His Church, the consecrated company of His saints.[1]

[1] The view we have taken of the significance of this miracle is that which Scholten suggests, when he says: "Die Heiligung einer dreisig jährigen Lähmung beim Teich Bethesda; v. 1–14 wird in Verbindung gebracht mit der geistigen Wirksamkeit Jesu als *des Erweckers des sittlich gelähmten Lebens der sündigen Menschheit;* vers. 20–26, welche deutlich als das grössere Zeichen in der sinnlichen Thatsache abgebildet ist. (*Vid. Das Evangelium nach Johannes*, p. 162.)

IV.

"Ecce panis angelorum,
Factus cibus viatorum,
Vere panis filiorum,
Non mittendus canibus.
In figuris præsignatur,
Cum Isaac immolatur,
Agnus paschæ deputatur,
Datur manna patribus.

Bone pastor, panis vere,
Jesu, nostri miserere,
Tu nos bona fac videre
In terra viventium.
Tu qui cuncta scis et vales,
Qui nos pascis hic mortales,
Tuos ibi commensales,
Cohæredes et sodales
Fac sanctorum civium."

THOMAS AQUINAS, *De Corpore Christi.*

"O quam sanctus panis iste!
Tu solus es, Jesu Christe,
Caro, cibus, sacramentum,
Quo non majus est inventum.

Salutare medicamen,
Peccatorum relevamen,
Pasce nos, a malis leva,
Duc nos, ubi est lux tua."

Carmen quoddam JOHANNIS HUS, *de sancta cœna.*

THE FEEDING OF THE FIVE THOUSAND.

THE FEEDING OF THE FIVE THOUSAND.

(John vi. 1–14.)

I. THE EXPOSITION.

THIS is the only miracle which all the evangelists record. Indeed it is one of the comparatively few points at which the four narratives with peculiar closeness touch each other. In the fourth Gospel, however, the incident is introduced, not in strict chronological order, not as serving to give completeness to the story of our Lord's sayings and doings, but simply as forming a natural introduction or a companion-picture to what follows—Christ's discourse regarding Himself as the true Bread of Life. Bearing this in mind, we need not be astonished to find that an interval of several months, indeed, well-nigh an entire year, is to be understood between chaps. v. and vi.[1]

"After these things." This formula, as we have already seen, is a quite general one. Marking, as it does, no more than transition, it stands for "sometime afterwards, on another occasion." "Jesus went

[1] Ewald thinks that something must have fallen out—that a section of the book has been lost. *Johann. Schriften*, p. 221. But as Dr. Sanday says, *Authorship and Historical Character of the Fourth Gospel*, p. 117, "There is not the slightest documentary evidence for such a supposition; and really the abrupt transition is only in accordance with the practice of the Evangelist. It brings out clearly the eclecticism of his narrative which does not profess to be continuous; but while it treats the particular sections selected with great minuteness of detail, leaves the links of connection between them wholly vague and indefinite."

over the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias." John alone gives the lake this latter name. "Thirty years earlier, when the other evangelists wrote, Herod's new town of Tiberias had not yet succeeded in giving its name to the lake, and superseding its older designation."[1] The scene of Messianic activity is thus suddenly shifted from Judæa back to Galilee. In this Galilæan district, as we know, a more favourable reception was usually accorded the new Teacher than in Judæa.[2] Here, then, "a great multitude followed Him." They thronged around Him. He had already become a celebrity in their eyes; hence they hailed His appearance in their midst with general curiosity and expectation. They followed Him "because they beheld the signs which He did on them that were sick." Many of these signs, though unnoticed by John, are recorded by the other evangelists. These were works of an infinite power and love wrought upon those who were afflicted in body. He cured them, seeing in the ravages of disease among men the visible representation of the ravages of sin in the soul.

"And Jesus went up into the mountain," the hill country in the neighbourhood, "and there He sat with His disciples." The purpose of His thus retiring with His little band of chosen followers is stated by Mark. "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile," He had said to them; "for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat." It was therefore for bodily rest that for a season this solitude was sought. We have to remember that the disciples had just returned from their first mission, and had rejoined

[1] Farrar's *Messages of the Books*, p. 114. [2] *Vid. e.g.* chap. iv. 45.

their Master. He now doubtless desired to hear from their own lips of their success. The Forerunner's death, further, had just been announced, and under all the depression which it occasioned this solitude was doubly needed and desired. But apart from any such immediate reasons, we know that often the midnight solitude of the everlasting hills in the case of our Lord Himself "witnessed the fervour of His prayer," and His wrapt fellowship with things unseen and eternal.

But this season of rest and contemplation was in this instance of very short duration. The great national feast of the Jews, the Passover, was nigh. Preparatory to its celebration in the Holy City, there were troops of pilgrims from all parts of the country drawing near to the capital. Especially were there many such companies thronging the great highways of Capernaum. Hence "the great multitude" mentioned in ver. 5. Our Lord had gone by water. They, on the other hand, had gone by land, taking a longer and a circuitous route. At length they had made up to Him. And now He "lifted up His eyes and saw" that He and His disciples were no longer alone. A multitude, weary and hungry by the greatness of the way, had gathered around Him. Turning then at once from private meditation and fellowship, He compassionated their helplessness. He "saith unto Philip, Whence are we to buy bread (or loaves), that these may eat?" From what place, or, it may be, from what fund is the needed help to come?

As the other evangelists tell us, the day was beginning to decline, it was "wearing away;" hence the harsh, or, at least, the inconsiderate counsel of the disciples could not be taken—"Send the multitude

away, that they may go into the towns and country round about and lodge and get victuals." The disciples' Master was more tenderly thoughtful than they. Besides, He had His own purpose in view. This perplexing crisis presented the opportunity of feeding, out of His exhaustless fulness, both the body and the soul. But why was the question put to Philip? Why was he singled out from among the disciples by having this inquiry addressed to him specially? The answer is not simply because he happened to be standing nearest to our Lord at the moment. This solution appears far too superficial. Nor, again, because he may be supposed to have had charge of the commissariat, the "res alimentaria," of the little band. It was rather Judas that was purse-bearer, and to whom it consequently pertained to make such purchases as were needful. Nor is the explanation, favoured by Trench, to be sought in the fact that the scene of this miracle was in the neighbourhood of Bethsaida, and that Philip, belonging originally to a town of that name, was likely to know better than others the localities where food could most easily be procured. This, indeed, would seem a very satisfactory supposition, were it not clear that there were two Bethsaidas, and that the Bethsaida of Philip's birthplace was not that of the miracle. The real explanation is given by the Evangelist himself. "This He said to prove him: for He Himself knew what He would do." It was not that our Lord needed any information for His guidance. He was Himself in no perplexity. As Augustine has put it, "It was not bread He sought from Philip, but faith." He knew what to do, and had already resolved to do it. He asked, therefore, in this case, as in other precisely similar cases, solely for the sake of him to whom the

question was put. It was in no tone of gaiety, almost of sportiveness, as Godet strangely supposes, that the words fell from His lips. The design was in all seriousness to test, and by testing, to bring out what measure of faith or of unfaith was in His follower, and so to lead him to a right knowledge of himself. But this is only putting the solution of our problem one stage back. The inquiry at once suggests itself, Why did Philip need thus to be proved? Were there elements, either in his character or in his circumstances, which rendered the testing of him more expedient, more necessary, than that of any other of the disciples? Now it is not altogether easy to give answer here. Amid the very scanty notices which we have of Philip there is hardly sufficient material for forming a definite estimate of him. Yet John has reserved one or two reminiscences of him which may be significant of his character.[1] Cherishing a sincere and simple faith, he at the same time appears to have been constitutionally distrustful, when confronted with difficulties — a man easily cast down, prone to despondency. Want of self-reliance seems in him to have been associated with slowness of spiritual perception. It has been supposed, possibly on this account, that he was the disciple who urged the plea, "Suffer me first to go and bury my father," and who needed to be promptly reminded of higher duties thus, "Let the dead bury

1 "The number of distinct persons portrayed by St. John is a singular mark of the authenticity of his narrative. In the Synoptic Gospels no one stands out from the apostles except St. Peter, and perhaps the sons of Zebedee; but in St. John we have characteristic traits of St. Andrew, i. 41 ff., vi. 8, 9, xii. 22; St. Philip, i. 44 ff., vi. 5, xii. 21 ff., xiv. 8 f.; St. Thomas, xi. 16, xiv. 5, xx. 24 ff.; St. Jude, xiv. 22." *Vid.* Westcott, *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*, p. 282.

their dead: follow thou Me." Whether this supposition have aught of probability or not, we do at least know that when the Gentile proselytes came to him saying, "Sir, we would see Jesus," he did not take upon himself the entire responsibility of introducing them. He first, with apparently characteristic diffidence, consulted with his brother disciple and townsman, Andrew. Yet again, it is Philip whom we find saying, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us."[1] He had failed to understand what Jesus had been saying about His Father and their Father, and about His going to His Father's house and their following Him thither. Light as yet was hardly even glimmering upon his spirit. Hence it was to him that the reproof was specially directed—"Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father. How sayest thou, Show us the Father?"

Now it is in perfect accord with these notices of him that Philip here appears as standing in need of proving. But he did not abide the testing. He failed in insight into his Master's power, and in trust in His willingness to exert it. At all events he merely says: "Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little." What a disappointing and alienating answer to our Lord's inquiry! Not the faintest expectation of a work of power is disclosed in it. Natural means are alone thought of, and there is no help to be found in them. But in his apparently constitutional diffidence, Philip seems prudently to have had recourse to his friend Andrew, just as we find him doing in chap. xii. He inquired what way out

[1] Chap. xiv. 8.

of the difficulty occurred to him. "One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto Him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley-loaves, and two fishes: but what are these among so many?" Although *the* disciple to whom Jesus had immediately addressed Himself had no suggestion of any kind to offer, yet *one* out of the circle of disciples (such is the force of the εἷς ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ) had something to say; yet it was but little apparently to the point. He could only speak of one little lad who had any provisions at all. His stock, probably carried for sale, was but slender. He had only five cakes of barley-bread—cakes such as that which in Gideon's dream "tumbled into the host of Midian." It was but a mean kind of fare—sometimes contemptuously spoken of as food of cattle rather than of men. It was given to Roman soldiers, instead of wheaten bread, when they were undergoing punishment.[1] In addition to this coarse and meagre bread, the lad had "two fishes"—salt fish used as a relish, for this the term implies.[2] What, indeed, were these among so many! Nothing but an evidence of general and entire destitution—a reminder that the place was desert, and that no help was nigh. But He who is the Son of God was about to "prepare a table in the wilderness."

Andrew, in calling attention to the meagre supply, was possibly giving utterance, not simply to despondency, but also to a hardly conscious, half-formed hope within his breast, that his Master would somehow graciously

[1] *Vid.* Wetstein.

[2] Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, i. 682, has an interesting discussion on the ὀψάριον, the pickled fish eaten with bread, like our sardines or the caviare of Russia. The word was probably a familiar Galilean word, and therefore an instance of the local knowledge of the author of the Gospel.

interpose. If so, it would appear that it was his faith, however imperfect, which made the working of the miracle possible; for we are told elsewhere that where no co-operation of faith existed, there no miracle took place. At all events the command is given, "Make the people (*ἀνθρώπους*) sit down," that is, the people as a whole. "So the men (*ἄνδρες*) sat down, in number about five thousand," that is to say, the men as distinguished from the women and children. These latter in a paschal caravan may be presumed to have been few in number, and they appear to have been served promiscuously. The multitude being thus arranged in companies, all confusion was avoided, and none were in danger of being overlooked. They were in groups like garden plots;[1] and they were reclining on "the green grass," as the more vivid and pictorial Gospel of Mark tells us. It was in the month Nisan, the so-called month of flowers. "There was much grass in the place;" and in the latter end of the spring season the rains, which had but recently fallen, had left its verdure unimpaired. The spot, Dean Stanley believes,[2] may almost exactly be identified. There, where the tall grass broken down by the feet of the multitude so as to make something like natural couches for the way-worn guests, they waited. All had wondering expectations. Incredulity doubtless prevailed; yet something like faith may have been awakened in some breasts. We can most readily sympathise with the doubters; for, as Bishop Hall says, "Nothing is more easy than to trust God when our barns and coffers are full, and to say, 'Give to us our daily bread,' when we have it in our cupboard. But when we have nothing,

[1] *πρασιαί* in the other evangelists.
[2] *Vid. Sinai and Palestine*, p. 381.

when we know not how or whence to get anything, then to depend upon an invisible bounty, this is a true and noble act of faith." Such a height, a nobility of faith, however, some of the disciples at least may have approached, or even now attained. "Jesus therefore took the loaves." He had previously said, "Bring them hither to Me." He needed not to have done so. The loaves might have been awanting, and yet the supply might have been given. But here, as in all similar cases, for disciplinary purposes, the outgoing of His power was associated with some material visible thing, however humble and inadequate. "And having given thanks, He distributed to them that were sat down; likewise also of the fishes as much as they would." The thanksgiving was nothing more than the ordinary grace before meat, the well-known formula familiar to every Jewish household, "Blessed art Thou, Jehovah our God, King of the world, who causest to come forth bread from the earth." This word of thanksgiving became now the creative word of multiplying. God's gift in these few common loaves became now bread from heaven; and it was "received with thanksgiving, for it was sanctified by the word of God and prayer."

The disciples are represented by the other evangelists as the chosen means of communication between our Lord and the people; and the provision in their hands, like the meal in the barrel and the oil in the cruse of the widow of Sarepta, failed not. There was enough and to spare. "They did all eat and were filled." "When they were filled, He saith unto His disciples, Gather up the broken pieces which remain over, that nothing be lost." John alone records this command, although the other evangelists imply it,

telling us that it was obeyed. This gathering up of the fragments has been adduced as a strong mark of truth in the narrative. The command is what might be expected from our Lord. He would enjoin upon His followers the duty of carefulness. "We do not find," it has been said, "the owner of Fortunatus' purse careful against extravagance." But it is otherwise with Him who, even in the form of a servant, manifested Himself as Lord of all. He would teach His people that they must so act in dealing with all His gifts, that it may be thoughtfully said of them—

> "Frugality and bounty too,
> These diff'ring virtues meet in you."

A Christian who is habitually thriftless, is one who belies his profession, because he disobeys his Master. Such is the lesson incidentally suggested by this part of the narrative. As Dryden has put it—

> "Thus Heaven, though all-sufficient, shows a thrift
> In His economy, and bounds His gift."

But there appears yet a further design in our Lord's command. The gathering of the broken pieces brought out into all the greater prominence the reality of the miracle. More was gathered at the end than had existed at the beginning. "So they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with broken pieces from the five barley-loaves, which remained over unto them that had eaten." Thus a little had become much; a hopeless scarcity had been exchanged for overflowing abundance. As in the first sign at Cana of Galilee, men saw creative power in reference to quality,—water transformed into wine,— so now they beheld it in reference to quantity. But it was plain bread still,

not luxury, but plenty; yet only barley-loaves to the end. Yet another design may be found in the gathering up of the fragments. There were twelve baskets full, one evidently for each disciple. There was thus illustrated what Lightfoot tells us "was the custom and rule, that when the Jews ate together, they left something to those that served; which remnant was called Peah." The disciples further, in carrying out the orders of their Lord in the spirit of self-denial,—apparently distributing to others, reserving no share for themselves,—were now to receive personally their due reward. Their own wallets were to be replenished. Provision was thus secured for their own needs in their continued journey. It was a common practice of the Jews when travelling to carry with them food-baskets. In this way they avoided all ceremonial pollution, such as might otherwise be incurred. These poor baskets of wicker or of willow are designated here and also in the Synoptics by one name (κόφινοι). It was the Jewish name. When, however, we turn to the allied miracle—that of the feeding of the four thousand, recorded by Matthew and Mark, the baskets there mentioned appear under a different, apparently a more general name (σπυρίδες). This may seem a small and trivial point. But in reality it is not so. The careful, discriminating use of these two terms suggests that the multitudes in the two cases were of different nationalities.[1] Thus this distinction, one which the text neither of the Authorised nor of the Revised Translation has recognised, is one of considerable interest, and even of apologetic importance.

The narrative of the sign closes thus: "When,

[1] *Vid.* Bishop Lightfoot, *Revision of New Testament*, p. 71.

therefore, the people saw the sign which He did, they said, This is of a truth the prophet that cometh into the world." The confession of their faith, at least for the time being, was this, that He who had given them bread of wonder in the wilderness, as did Moses, was in reality the prophet like unto Moses, unto whom the people should hearken.[1] Nay more, they declared Him in yet clearer way to be "The Coming One," He who had been coming all those weary centuries of waiting that lay behind them, the King of Israel, the Deliverer of the world.[2] Thus it was that in the recognition of this sign, the faint, glimmering light of Messianic hope burst forth, though it proved but momentarily, in this Jewish multitude into a clear, bright flame.[3]

II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SIGN.

Augustine's exposition of this sign is upon the whole singularly disappointing. It is both meagre and fanciful. His introduction, however, is extremely

[1] Deut. xviii. 15. [2] *Vid.* John xi. 27.

[3] The narrative of this miracle in the fourth Gospel has often been cited as supplying a remarkable number of what are called undesigned coincidences. Blunt's *Scriptural Coincidences*, pp. 264–267, is well worthy of consultation here. It also supplies many evidences in proof of the writer being himself an eye-witness. *Vid.* Stanley Leathes' *Witness of St. John to Christ*, p. 292; and on the evidence of his minute acquaintance with localities, *vid.* Luthardt, *Ursprung des Joann. Evangelium*, p. 138. A note by Rev. A. Carr, M.A., in the *Expositor*, 1890, p. 79, on Philip's calculation as to the two hundred denarii is interesting. It was no haphazard guess, but the result of a swift and shrewd calculation. The note closes thus: "Our Lord's appeal to Philip may imply that such matter-of-fact calculation was characteristic of him. There was a want of imagination and of the faith which needs imagination. The very power to calculate and make shrewd provision for the future may have been the element in his character which needed the divine rebuke of the miracle which followed."

worthy of citation. "Let us," he says, "interrogate the miracles themselves, what they speak to us concerning Christ: for they have their tongue, if they be understood. Since Christ is the Word of God, every deed of that Word is to us a word. Therefore, as concerns this miracle, since we have heard how great it is, let us search how profound it is: let us not delight ourselves with the mere outside, but also explore its depth. This, which we admire on its outer side, hath something within. We have seen, we have beheld, a great, a glorious, an altogether divine work, which could not be wrought save only by God: from the thing done we have praised the Doer. But in like manner, as if we were anywhere inspecting a fair piece of writing, it would not be enough that we should praise the writer's skilful hand, that he formed the letters even, equal, and graceful, unless we should also read what he by them would make known to us: so, he who does but look at the thing done in this miracle is delighted by the beauty of the deed, and moved to admiration of the Artificer; but he who understands, does, as it were, read it. It is one way in which we look at a picture; another at a writing. When thou seest a picture, this is all, to see, to praise: when thou seest a writing, this is not all: thou art put in mind also to read it."[1] This miracle, then, being a writing as well as a picture, let us try to read it, that so we may learn its meaning. Following these wise directions of the great Church Father, rather than his own ofttimes wayward practice of them, let us learn what this sign says.

Now, however much we may seem to put ourselves out of harmony with present-day modes of thought,

[1] *Homilies on St. John's Gospel*, No. xxiv.

we need not hesitate to hold that this sign, like its companion-picture, the first sign, is in a very real sense a representation of that infinite Providence which gives to the children of men the fruits of the earth in their season. We feel that to deny this is to do violence to the true instincts of the Christian heart. Year by year the eye of faith sees the repetition of this work of power in the whitened autumn fields. The single grain of corn is cast into the furrows: in due time it is multiplied into the ripened ears. Thus, while the eye of contemplation sees with wonder this annual miracle in nature, the meditation of the heart finds this adoring and thankful exclamation to be its proper utterance—"Thou openest Thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing."

But while not unmindful of this lesson, we must turn from it to the meaning proper. Like the others in this Gospel, this miracle is a symbol of our Lord's glory, not in nature, but in His kingdom. Like that which follows it and is so closely associated with it, it declares, further, the glory of Christ Jesus in His kingdom, in relation, not to the individual soul alone, but also, and chiefly, to His Church,—the consecrated company of those who truly bear His name,—those who, feeding on Him now as the Bread of Life, shall at last find the beatitude realised, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." It was a miracle wrought on behalf of the multitude, both for their help and for their instruction. But it had its significance above all for the little band of immediate disciples, in view of the work to be committed to them.

We cannot, of course, follow those expositors who

discover the most fantastic mystical meanings even in the minutest details. The desert place, the five thousand, the sitting on the ground, the much grass, the loaves and fishes, the lad who supplied them, the baskets,—all these have been pressed into the service of highly allegorical interpretation.[1] Nor can we further accept the view, so subtly and persuasively maintained by Newman,[2] that in the discourse of our Lord following on this miracle there is the teaching of the eucharistic presence. It is difficult to conceive such a view, at least as receiving any support in the narrative of the miracle itself. It is therefore in no sense safe to go further than this, that although the Lord's Supper had not yet been instituted, the idea that underlies it is probably present throughout a considerable part of the discourse, and may therefore be assumed to be also present in the sign which the discourse is manifestly made to expound. Edersheim seems well to have caught the spirit of our Lord's work, thus: "The Passover was nigh, of which He was to be the Paschal Lamb, the Bread which He gave, the Supper, and around which He would gather those scattered, shepherdless sheep into one flock of many 'companies,' to which His apostles were to bring the bread He had blessed and broken, to their sufficient and more than sufficient nourishment; from which, indeed, they would carry the remnant-baskets full after the flock had been fed, to the poor in the outlying places of far-off heathendom. And so thoughts

[1] *Vid.* Lampe, *in loc.* Even he himself has made this curious discovery —the foreshadowing of Wyclif and Hus in the lad with the loaves. Attention may here be called to a very different kind of treatment of the miracle in Abbott's *Philochristus*—a most unsatisfactory and unnatural attempt to explain it away, and to empty it of all its import.

[2] *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, vol. vi. p. 136.

of the past, the present, and the future must have mingled—thoughts of the Passover in the past, of the last, the Holy Supper in the future, and of the deeper inward meaning and bearing of both the one and the other; thoughts also of this flock, and of that other flock which was yet to gather, and of the far-off places, and of the apostles and their service, and of the provision which they were to carry from His hands—a provision never exhausted by present need, and which always leaves enough to carry thence and far away."[1] By recognising, therefore, a general reference of this kind as lying in the sign, though it be lying only in the background, we put ourselves in line with the almost universal consensus of the Church. We find such an allusion to the Lord's Supper, for instance, in the artistic portrayal of this miracle in the catacombs of Rome, and also in those of Alexandria. The artists in the service of the Church,

> "On those walls subterranean, where she hid
> Her head in ignominy, death, and tombs,"

clearly understood this work of power as an anticipation of the great central rite of the Christian religion.[2] This view, though in most cases greatly exaggerated in the statement of it, has held its ground ever since.

But to be more specific, the truth which our Lord's discourse emphasises, reverting to it over and over again, and displaying it in different aspects, is this—He Himself is the true Bread of Life, or Living Bread. He is the one true and all-sufficient sustenance of His people. He not only gives this, but He Himself *is*

[1] Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, i. p. 679.
[2] *Vid.* Northcote and Brownlow's *Roma Sotterranea*, ii. p. 70 ff.

this. All that is in Him, and goes forth from Him, is life-giving and life-sustaining. He is the heavenly Manna provided for the soul's hunger, and satisfying it. (Vers. 35 and 48–50.) This is set forth especially in ver. 51, and those verses immediately following—embracing that mysterious and much contested utterance, which, not to speak of the whole discourse, might well claim a treatise for itself. Our Lord there declares Himself, in all His fulness, with reference to His incarnation and His atonement, as the Living Bread.[1] He will give His life "for the life of the world." He further declares the need of personal appropriating faith in Himself for the reception of that life. The eating of the flesh of the Son of man and drinking of His blood is the condition of having this life, and that is but the symbolical word-expression for the soul's appropriation of Him by faith. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." Now, without going further into the exposition of this discourse of our Lord's,—this would be entirely alien to our design,—we may surely conclude that the miracle which is so closely associated with the discourse, and, indeed, occasioned it, symbolises more or less clearly the same teaching. It is hard to conceive that the Divine Teacher had not the same design in view alike in His work and in His word. It is equally hard to conceive that this is not the Evangelist's conviction in recording them.

But while this is acknowledged, the miracle is dis-

[1] The use of the word σάρξ seems intended definitely to point to His atoning death. Compare Eph. ii. 15; Col. i. 23; 1 Pet. iii. 18. *Vid.* note in Ellicott's *Historical Lectures on the Life of our Lord*, p. 212. For a statement and discussion of the conflicting views of this passage, Lücke, *in loc.*, is worth consulting.

tinguished from the discourse in this respect, that it gives especial prominence, not so much to Christ Jesus as the Bread of Life, as to the *diffusion* of the spiritual life which is in Him. It is, in other words, a parable chiefly of the spread of the gospel of the kingdom. All the blessings which are in Him, and which are offered in His gospel, are to be *given*—and that to *ever-growing* multitudes of famishing souls, till the time of the end.

Many of the incidents in the narrative lend themselves readily as, if not typical, at least illustrative, of this. We are told, "He Himself knew what He would do," and He had a purpose beyond that of mere benevolence in the doing of it. The miracle wrought upon the bread—the staff of natural life, speaks of the progress of the kingdom of grace from small and apparently hopeless beginnings to full and entire satisfaction at last.

By nature men are in deeply felt need. Spiritually they are in the drought of the desert. "Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainteth within them." Like the prodigal, they find themselves in that land where there is "a mighty famine," and no man can give unto them. Theirs is a state, not only of need, but also of helplessness. Like the destitute multitude amid the solitudes of Tiberias, as the evening shadows closed around them, men have in their midst One who knows their wants, and is ever ready to meet them. His is the eye of a divine compassion. But before this help is vouchsafed, He must test them. He would ask, whence and by what means they themselves can look for aid. In this way would He make them conscious of their own inability. Nay more, if

we be allowed somewhat to press the subordinate incidents in the narrative, He would lead them to think, "What about the *buying?*" They must be brought to feel that of themselves they have nothing to give in exchange. They must acknowledge that they are "poor and miserable and blind and naked," that they are nothing, and have nothing, and can do nothing wherewith they can buy true soul-sustenance. Then, when they are thus brought face to face with this their destitution, the offer of help becomes possible. Divine help is near, all-sufficient, free, pressed upon their acceptance. There is spread for them "a table in the wilderness" — there is provided "that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." The bread which the soul needs is righteousness in Christ Jesus — a justifying and sanctifying righteousness alike, received by faith alone.

Thus it is that men, once realising their need, turn away from "the skeleton face of the world," to Him who came to save the world.

But this sign sets forth with undoubted prominence this further truth, the need of human agency in the bestowal of this spiritual provision. In the fourth Gospel, indeed, the distribution of the barley-loaves and fishes is not said to have been directly carried out by the disciples' hands. Yet this trait is too conspicuous in the narratives of the Synoptists to be overlooked. The gift is His, but it is by their hands that it is bestowed. This was a special honour conferred upon them; but it was designed to teach them, and to teach us, what is the trust committed by our Lord to all His followers. They are His ministering servants in His own great work. As He looks

abroad on the multitude of the human race, "hard bestead and hungry," He is ever saying to His disciples, "Give ye them to eat." They cannot fail, in view of this command, to think of their own slender resources, and to exclaim, "What are these among so many?" But thus, as Bishop Hall puts it, "In bidding them do what they cannot, He enables them to do what He bids." When He commands the duty, He also commands the blessing. Thus the little they have to give grows in the giving of it. He blesses, and in that blessing the ever-enlarging distribution becomes possible. We must therefore look, not in despondency to our own small stores, but in confidence to His multiplying power.[1]

Finally, we can read in this sign, not only the need of human instrumentality, but also the complete satisfaction which this bread from heaven gives. "They did all eat, and were filled." Yet they hungered again. Not so with the partakers of this spiritual provision. The gift, while it is free and full, is also all-satisfying, because it is enduring. "He that cometh unto Me shall never hunger." What He gives, nay, rather what He is Himself, is the true manna, which sustains in the wilderness of this world, and is at last "the hidden manna" of the heavenly home—that home into whose bliss all are welcomed,

> "Where they shall dwell as children
> Who here as exiles mourn."

The close of the sign would suggest this closing lesson—the gathered fragments tell us that there is

[1] Bushnell, *New Life*, p. 265, has an admirable discourse on this text, "Duty not measured by our own ability."

enough and to spare. Our cry, therefore, must ever be, "Lord, evermore give us this bread."[1]

[1] We may bring into connection with this sign the promise of the hidden manna to be given to him that overcometh in Rev. ii. 17. The Church of Pergamum is urged to refrain from participation in heathen feasts,—that θανάσιμον φάρμακον, as Ignatius, *Ep. ad Trall.* c. 6, calls them: as a reward for this their faithfulness and constancy, they are promised at last participation in a higher feast than earth can ever give, the eating of the heavenly manna, the φάρμακον ἀθανασίας, which that same Father speaks of, *Ad Ephes.* c. 20; hidden indeed now, like the earthly pot of manna, which the Jews fondly held was hidden till God should at last gather together His people, 2 Macc. ii. 4, 7, but at last to be displayed along with the tree of life in the Paradise of God,—hidden now from the children of the world, and also from even the children of the kingdom, for 'it doth not yet appear what we shall be.' That hidden manna, therefore, is the joyful perfected possession and fruition in glory of Him who is the Bread of Life, the All and in all of His people." *Vid.* the author's *Our Lord's Messages to the Seven Churches*, p. 117.

V.

"Jamque soporata torpebant omnia noete,
Cum puppis medio sulcabat in æquore fluctus
Jactata adverso surgentis flamine venti.
Ast ubi jam vigilum quarta statione premebat
Noctis iter, rapidos attollens lucifer ortus,
Fluctibus in liquidis sicco vestigia gressu
Suspensus carpebat iter—mirabile visu—!
Jamque propinquabat puppi, sed nescia nautæ
Attoniti tremulo vibrabant corda pavore
Clamoremque simul confusa mente dederunt.
Tum pavidis Christus loquitur: 'Timor omnis abesto,
Credentumque regat vegetans constantia mentem,
En Ego sum, vestræ doctorem noscite lucis."

Juvenci Evangeliorum libri quatuor, iii. 97.

THE WALKING ON THE WATER.

THE WALKING ON THE WATER.

(John vi. 15–21.)

I. THE EXPOSITION.

THIS fifth sign of the fourth Gospel is recorded, not by John alone, but also by Matthew and Mark. In all the three narratives it stands immediately after the Feeding of the five thousand in the desert place. It is represented also as having been wrought in point of time immediately after it. The people, who had witnessed the miracle of the loaves, declared Jesus with one accord to be "the Prophet that cometh into the world." Having this conviction borne in upon their minds, they proceeded at once to act upon it. They will forcibly make Him king. They will thus, while honouring Him, benefit themselves. They will not suffer any interference with this their settled purpose. "They were about to come and take Him by force." Assuming His unwillingness, at least for the time being, to become their leader, they will even go the length of compulsion. Here was the desert place—the very district where previous insurrectionary schemes had taken shape. Everything seemed favourable; they would therefore brook no delay. Godet suggests that the secret direction of the plot may have been in the hands of Judas. Whether this be so or not, the spirit which prompted the movement was, even while in itself religiously patriotic, unspiritual and sordid. Our Lord indeed afterwards declared

Himself before Pilate to be a king, but His kingdom is not of this world. In no outward, material, Jewish sense was He sent to reign over men. He had first to be their Priest, by His own blood purchasing for Himself and "purifying unto Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works."[1] Hence it was that "He withdrew again into the mountain Himself alone." "Climbing the steep altar-stairs of that lone mountain sanctuary," He would quench all such mistaken enthusiasm in His followers, and overthrow all such temptation, if indeed this were one of His temptations, in Himself. He would not now be taken by force to receive a crown; but the hour was coming when He would willingly submit to be taken by force, and so to become a Saviour on the cross. In fellowship, therefore, with the unseen and eternal, He retired to solitude—in meditation and prayer seeking strength for the approaching struggle.

Meanwhile, what about the disciples? Possibly to some extent sympathising with the popular desire, they would fain have kept close to Him, awaiting the issue of events; but, as Matthew and Mark tell us, He "straightway constrained them to enter into the boat." He, on His part, would use something like force towards them, but it is the gentle constraint of love. He would have them "go before Him unto the other side, till He should send the multitudes away."[2] He would thus break them off from the dangerous contagion of a false and short-lived enthusiasm. Their devotion, it is true, did not see things in this light; hence the loving compulsion that was necessarily put upon them. But their devotion was at length crowned by their obedience. At His command they set out towards

[1] Titus ii. 14. [2] Matt. xiv. 22.

Bethsaida Julias, in the direction of Capernaum. Their submission was a manifestation and a triumph of their loyalty. Bishop Hall says: "We are never perfect disciples till we can depart from our reason, from our will; yea, O Saviour, when Thou biddest us, from Thyself."

Evening had now come, the second evening, that is to say, from sunset to dark: "and Jesus had not yet come to them." Darkness was settling down upon the disciples' hearts, as well as upon creation around them, for He, their true light,—their true "Stella Maris,"—was not there. "The sea," too, "was rising by reason of a great wind that blew." It was evidently a sudden and violent squall, the water running high. Like many of the familiar Swiss lakes, this inland Sea of Tiberias was surrounded by mountain gorges, through which the wind might rush with unexpected vehemence. Ritter[1] gives a vivid description of such a storm as we may imagine this to have been. The level of the lake "is sometimes raised three or four feet during the rainy season,—a phenomenon perfectly intelligible in view of the many brooks which flow into it." This, indeed, was not the rainy season; Ritter proceeds, however, thus: "Russegger witnessed a tempest sweep over the sea about the last of December, dashing waves against the shore with great violence, and yet on the land scarcely a breath of wind was to be felt. . . . He suspected that the wind struck the surface of the lake at such an angle as to be reflected again and glance off, striking the shore high up the slope of the basin, and literally leaving the city of Tiberias beneath the motion of the atmospheric current." Be this as it may, on this day of wonder the boat, as Matthew tells us, was

[1] *Comparative Geography of Palestine*, ii. 251.

"distressed by the waves; for the wind was contrary." It was, as it were, plagued and tossed. The disciples themselves, too, were distressed. The elements were against them, and so above all, as they felt, was the absence of their Friend and Master. But His eye none the less was upon them, all unknown. That eye which was uplifted in rapt contemplation to heaven was also turned to the troubled tempest-tossed disciples. Mark expressly says of Him, "seeing them distressed in rowing." Their danger, their exhaustion, their anxiety, were all before Him. But yet He delayed. Their progress had been very little compared with the labour they had expended. "About five and twenty or thirty furlongs," not much more than half-way across, had they rowed.[1] At this point their Master came, not earlier. In this way He doubtless designed to try them—to evoke out of the tumult of their troubled thoughts the grace of patience. Thus He taught them trustfulness and the need of fervid importunity of prayer; thus He gave them at last the greater gladness when His presence was vouchsafed. In this we have a lesson in no sense hard to read, however hard to practise. His times to help are not always—not even

[1] "*About.*" "The Holy Spirit inspires the evangelists, but does not annihilate their human faculties or destroy their personal identity. He reveals to them heavenly things beyond the range of time and space, but leaves them to calculate distances on earth and water by human measurement. He gives them inspiration, but not omniscience." Bishop Wordsworth *in loc.* Here is one of the most extravagant expositions of Augustine, interesting simply on account of that extravagance: "It had sufficed to say *five and twenty*, sufficed to say *thirty*, especially as it is spoken conjecturally, not affirmatively. Surely the truth would not be perilled in a matter of conjectural estimate, if he had said about thirty, or about five and twenty furlongs. But of *five and twenty* he hath made *thirty*. Let us look for the number five and twenty: of what does it consist? Of the number five. That number five pertaineth to the Law. The same are the five books of Moses; the same those five porches containing the ailing folk; the same the five loaves feeding five thousand men. So, then, the

usually—the times which we appoint. Rather let it be said, His lingering delay is often in reality His true hastening to help. In all the diverse sufferings He permits His people to endure, He is but testing, and so fitting them to receive the fulness of the succour which He brings. So common is this aspect of Divine providence that it has passed into the current proverbs of many lands. The Jews, for instance, say, "When the tale of bricks is doubled, Moses comes;"[1] and we say, "Man's extremity is God's opportunity," or otherwise, "When need is highest, help is nighest." Thus the experience of the disciples on the troubled Lake of Gennesaret is typical of universal human life.

"They behold Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the boat." They discern His approach "through the gleam of the water and the broken light of the stars."[2] The word distinctly means intentness and fixedness of gaze, with the implied suggestion of mental effort to consider and realise (*θεωρεῖν*). In this, the glory of the Son of man thus made visible as "the pavemented waves yielded a firm causeway to His sacred feet,"[3] we recognise Him of whom the Psalmist

number twenty-five signifieth the Law; because five by five, *i.e.* five times five, make twenty-five, or five squared. But the Law, before the Gospel came, lacked perfection. Now perfection is comprised in the number six. Therefore in six days God perfected the world, and the five are multiplied by six that the Law may be filled up by the gospel, that six times five become thirty. To them, therefore, which fulfil the Law cometh Jesus. And cometh in what manner? Treading the waves; while all the swellings of the world He hath under His feet; all its heights He presseth down. Thus fares it, so long as time runs on, so long as the world's age waxeth older; more and more tribulation in this world, more and more evils, more and more crushing disasters; they mount higher and higher, all these: Jesus passeth on, treading the waves." *Homilies on St. John's Gospel*, Library of the Fathers, p. 385.

[1] "Cum duplicantur lateres, Moses venit." *Vid.* Trench, *Proverbs*, p. 61.

[2] Geikie.

[3] Bishop Hall.

sings, "Thy way was in the sea, and Thy paths in the great waters, and Thy footsteps were not known;"[1] and of Whom, in the Book of Job, it is said, "Which alone stretcheth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves (literally, the high places) of the sea."[2]

"And they were afraid." Why, John does not say. The other evangelists say, They "supposed that it was an apparition,"—what in Job[3] is called "a vision of the night"—a phantom—that which was more to be dreaded even than the elemental strife itself, and "they cried out." The helpless agony of terror laid hold of them, as they imagined that they beheld, not their Lord Himself—not one of the children of men, but one of those spirits who may be around men, all unseen, perhaps even the spirit of the storm itself.[4] So Graham, the poet of the Sabbath—

> ". . . The voyagers appalled,
> Shrink from the fancied spirit of the flood."

This superstition and consequent alarm of the disciples we ought to regard as lying nearer to truth than the so-called enlightened philosophy of our day, which in cold negation says with the Sadducees of old "that there is neither angel nor spirit." The involuntary cry of dread was eminently natural. It is a vivid transcript from the life. In that fear we find a mighty, because an instinctive, witness to man's sinfulness. Flesh and blood — fallen humanity — shrink from mysterious contact with the other world. Men have

[1] Ps. lxxvii. 19. [2] Job ix. 8. [3] xx. 8.

[4] The φάντασμα here is to be distinguished from the πνεῦμα in the somewhat parallel case, Luke xxiv. 37. This latter refers to the supposition of the disciples that He who stood in the midst of them was the disembodied spirit of their Lord, whom they still regarded as dead, making itself visible. They still conceived of His body as hidden in the sepulchre of the rich man's garden.

a secret terror in such contact, either real or imaginary, because it reminds them of their "secret sins." In Mark's narrative we have an addition of some interest and importance: "He would have passed by them." His approach had the design of reassuring and assisting and protecting His disciples, and yet He would have passed, had He not been arrested, as is implied, by the cry of need. But it was just this very cry of helplessness which He sought. They had been tried already by His delay: He would lovingly prolong the trial still by His apparent indifference. By such testing they were put in training to expect and receive the blessing. Then just as the morning light was beginning to tinge the ruffled waters, the day-dawn of hope and joy was beginning to spread abroad in their hearts. This incidental touch in the picture is peculiarly illustrative of our Lord's dealings with His disciples. We have frequent parallels. For instance, He gave no heed to the petition of the blind men by the wayside, till "they cried the more." The Canaanitish woman met with no response till she followed Him into the house and long importuned Him. His own parables also emphasise this same aspect of His attitude to human need. We have but to think of the man in bed with his household, who needs to be assailed by urgent importunity before he will arise and give the loaves to him who seeks them; and the unjust judge who grants the widow's prayers only after oft-repeated entreaty. Specially we have the exact parallel in the interview with the Emmaus disciples:[1] "He made as though He would go farther." Thus He called forth into distinct consciousness and articulate expression that which He most longed for,

[1] Luke xxiv. 28.

the prayer that He would abide with them. He did so act in no mere pretence, but with deliberate design. He is with His people, necessarily, only in so far as they desire Him. He is a present Saviour and Teacher and Friend only to those who seek Him. He is a stranger, an alien, to those whose hearts do not go out to Him in persistent effort of longing. The lesson, then, which lies very near the surface of this trait of the narrative is just this—We must overcome Him whose own greatest desire it is to be overcome. In His seeming refusal we must see only His preparing us to receive; in His seeming to pass by we must see only His coming to abide.

The well-known, reassuring voice—Mark says, "He spake with them," a beautiful and natural touch of life—is heard above the voice of the storm: "It is I; be not afraid"—no form of dread, I Myself, your Friend. He who is Lord of His people's hearts is also Lord of all the storms to which they may be exposed. Therefore so far from being afraid, they are "confident in this." "Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid:"[1] that announcement, one which is again heard falling from the glorified throne,[2] is the summed sweetness of God's message in Christ Jesus from heaven to man on earth. It is the stay of all fainting hearts. Luther never wearied of inscribing the words on the margin of his study Bible. They made him, as they make all saints amid the storms of time, strong—strong to labour and to wait.

It is to be noticed that there lies between verses 20 and 21, a miracle within the miracle,—narrated only by Matthew,[3]—the incident of Peter's rashness and failure. It is one that is indubitably recognised as characteristic

[1] Mark. [2] Rev. i. 17. [3] xiv. 27.

of that disciple. "Peter answered Him and said, Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee upon the waters." It was the promptness of his warm attachment which led him so to speak; but there was mingled with it the presumption of self-ignorance. It may even to a certain extent have been the utterance of pride, as on another occasion he would signalise himself and his faith above his brother disciples and their faith. The answer to the bold "Bid me" is the simple permissive "Come." If there is little of encouragement, there is nothing to repel in it, indeed there could not be. To quote Bishop Hall once more: "The suit of ambition is suddenly quashed in the mother of the Zebedees. The suits of revenge prove no better in the mouth of the two fiery disciples. But a suit of faith, though high, and seemingly unfit for us, He hath no power to deny. How much less, O Saviour, wilt Thou stick at those things which lie in the very road of our Christianity! Never man said, Bid me come to Thee in the way of Thy commandments, whom Thou didst not both bid and enable to come." For a time the disciple's faith laid hold of his Master's power. But his faith ere long failed as it meditated on its own daring. "When he saw the wind (or the strong wind) he was afraid." Beginning to fear, he began also to sink. Even the swimmer's art, which was his,[1] was now of no avail. But out of the depths of his sinking heart he could cry, "Lord, save me." This *de profundis* cry—this prayer of distress and confidence alike, brought help. "Immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand, and took hold of him." But the aid is accompanied by reproof, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou

[1] John xxi. 7.

doubt?" Here we may assuredly say, "which things contain an allegory."[1] The lesson of the allegory, in so far as there is a lesson of reproof in it, is just this: "To aim at being for Christ, to expect to do for Christ what Christ has neither enjoined nor promised, is really not faith, but fanaticism. There is a considerable resemblance between the two, on the surface. The one has been again and again mistaken for the other. There is a likeness in their tone, in their earnestness, in their ardour, sometimes for a while in their effects; but they are entirely different in their source, their principle, and their results. Faith arises out of grace. Fanaticism has its source in self. Faith is ruled by the word of the Lord. Fanaticism by the wish, will, and impulse of the creature. Faith results in solid fruits and works of Christ. Fanaticism burns itself out in a fruitless fervour, or dashes itself to pieces in a terrible fall."[2] The lessons of the episode, which run on other lines, are easily found, and as easily applied. Returning to the narrative of the fourth Gospel, we read: "They were willing therefore to receive Him into the boat; and straightway the boat was at the land whither they were going." Matthew and Mark expressly say that our Lord entered the boat. John describes only the willingness of the disciples to receive Him. Of course it is open to us to hold that what they were willing to do they actually did; and thus any supposed discrepancy vanishes. There is greater difficulty with what follows. John seems to add yet another miracle to that which had already taken place—the immediate arrival at the shore. The statement may possibly be explained psychologically,

[1] Gal. v. 24.

[2] Professor Laidlaw, *The Miracles of our Lord*, p. 103.

as Dr. Sanday suggests. "The apostle, intent upon the marvellous occurrence, and occupied with his own devout conclusions, would not notice the motion of the ship; and, a favourable breeze arising, it might easily be at the land before he was aware. At least this may serve as a conjecture." Godet, however, appears to attain a deeper, truer insight into the situation when he says: "Jesus did indeed enter it, but had not time to take His seat, the arrival on shore taking place simultaneously with His entrance. How, in fact, can we imagine that after an act of power so mighty and so royal as the walking upon the waters, Jesus should have settled Himself in the boat, and the voyage have been continued by the toilsome stroke of the oar? The moment He set foot in the ship He imparted to it, as He had just done to St. Peter, that victorious power over gravity and space which had been so majestically displayed in His own person."

Once more using this sign as an illustration, we may say that, tossed by trials, toiling in labours, and trembling amid dangers, as more or less all Christ's people often are, we can ever look to Him who is near us in the darkness, and say, in the well-known prayer of the fishermen of Brittany: "Save us, O God! Thine ocean is so large, and our little boat is so small!"

II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SIGN.

There are instructive points of comparison and of contrast presented by the three miracles of power over nature which the fourth Gospel records. The water made wine represents our Lord as the source of

spiritual joy; the bread multiplied represents Him as the source of spiritual subsistence; the walking on the water represents Him as the source of spiritual protection and guidance. But in their details these three miracles are very different from one another. The several scenes are the social festival in the private dwelling, the long waving green grass of the wilderness, and the stormy midnight lake. These all witness the Saviour's help, unpromised, unasked, unexpected, in times of festivity, of famine, and of fear. The differences, further, which are apparent in the outward circumstances of these miracles, exist also in their essential nature. They are different, not in degree, not in accident, but in kind. In one, the substance remains the same while the properties are changed. In another, the properties remain the same, while the substance is extended. In the third, that force which may be regarded as the most constant and universal around us is subdued to the control of human will. But, on the other hand, the three works of power are alike in this, that they are all wrought in the presence of a want, the unexpressed acknowledgment of need. It is this which brings Divine help near.[1]

But points of this kind need not claim our present attention. It is with the inner significance of the miracle that we are alone concerned. This is the second of the pair of signs which seem to set forth our Lord in relation to His Church. It is inseparably associated with the narrative of the feeding of the multitude.[2]

[1] *Vid.* Westcott's *Characteristics of the Gospel Miracles*, p. 13 ff.

[2] Dr. Weiss, *Life of Christ*, ii. 396, holds that those who regard this Gospel as a didactic re-formation of synoptic material, must find some explanation of the fact that this narrative separates the account of the feeding of the multitude from the discourse which refers to that feeding. This explanation has been offered in Schmidt and Holzendorff's *New Testa-*

He is there represented, or rather He there represents Himself, as the Divine Giver of sustenance to His people. Here He is seen as the Divine Giver to them of protection. His unseen presence is a real presence of comfort and guidance and succour to His Church of all time—from its beginning on the day of Pentecost, onwards till the day of His coming, His reappearing in the glory of His kingdom. The Evangelist, looking back to this incident through the long vista of many troubled years, with all their experiences, could hardly fail to read this lesson into it, and in so doing, to feel that he was learning and expounding the mind of Christ. It is extremely doubtful whether, in addition to this significance of the sign, we can see in it, as many have done,[1] a forecasting of the days between our Lord's death and resurrection. There is no hint whatever in the record to point us in this direction.

With a sure and unerring instinct, the Church of all ages has taken this incident to set forth and illustrate the Saviour's presence, in all times of trouble, with the individual soul. We have, for instance, the Greek hymn of Anatolius, the Patriarch of Constantinople,

ment Commentary: "This scene on the lake seems to be distinctly intended to serve the purpose of an interlude between the miraculous feeding of the multitude and the discourse upon the true bread, in which His body appears free from all coarse materialism, so that we may not take what follows about eating His flesh in a material sense." Surely only those who are sorely pressed for argument can accept such a forced supposition.

[1] So Luthardt and Godet. The latter says: "In the multiplication of the loaves and the fishes He had foreshadowed the sacrifice which He would make of His flesh for the food of the world; in the terrible night of darkness and separation which followed, He had suffered them to feel a foretaste of that more painful and more real separation which would follow His death; and now, in this unexpected and triumphant return across the waves, He prefigured His glorious resurrection, and even His triumphant ascension, in which His Church was to share, by being raised with Him to heavenly places by the breath of His Spirit."

and the upholder of her equality with Rome.[1] We have many others of different ages and lands. The Peter-episode, in particular, seems to have laid hold of the doubting yet clinging spirit of Arthur Clough, and in his lines has given voice to a half-formed feeble hope—

> "It may be true
> That while we walk the troublous tossing sea,
> That when we see the o'ertopping waves advance,
> And when we feel our feet beneath us sink,
> There are who walk beside us; and the cry
> That rises so spontaneous to our lips,
> The 'Help us, or we perish,' is not nought,
> An evanescent spectrum of disease.
> It may be that in deed and not in fancy,
> A hand that is not ours upstays our steps,
> A voice that is not ours commands the waves;
> Commands the waves, and whispers in our ear,
> O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?
> At any rate,
> That there are beings above us, I believe,
> And when we lift up holy hands in prayer,
> I will not say they will not give us aid."

But the episode of Peter's rashness and failing faith, so prominent in the other Gospels, significantly drops out in this. It is as if the Evangelist designed by the omission to suggest that the reference to the individual, for the most part, recedes into the background, and that the relation of our Lord to His disciples as a whole—the Church as one company—comes chiefly into prominence. Thus this sign stands in line with that to which it is so closely linked.

We are all familiar with the symbolic use in Scripture of what Matthew Arnold so well describes as "the unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea." The Evangelist John

[1] So at least Dr. Neale, who translates it—"Fierce was the wild billow, dark was the night"—holds. But *vid.* Julian's *Dictionary of Hymnology*, article "Anatolius," for reasons for assigning a much later date to this Greek hymn-writer. The original Greek does not seem as yet to have been found.

especially delights in this use of it. Following the symbolism of the Psalms and the Prophets, most of all, of Daniel, he has depicted in the Book of the Revelation, and that too before he wrote the Gospel, the rest of the future thus, "and the sea is no more."[1] In view of all the hard experiences which had befallen himself and the infant Church of Christ—in his reverie, sending hope forward to lay hold of the promised peace of Heaven, he thinks of the restless, tumultuous waves of the world's sin and care as "the ocean of time, whose waters of deep woe are brackish with the salt of human tears." We need not therefore hesitate, having the Evangelist's own hint to help us, to recognise in this sign the Church of Christ, exposed ceaselessly to storm and danger. Such is the relation in which the consecrated company of Christ's people ever stand to the world. It cannot be otherwise; for while they are active, energetic workers, the great wind that blows is contrary. "They are toiling in rowing."[2] They are also encompassed by darkness. The gloom that had fallen on the changeful, troubled lake of Galilee lends itself as an illustration, though probably nothing more, of the disquiet and perplexity—the night of ignorance, and doubt, and sin, and sorrow, in which the Church must now fulfil its mission, as compared with the dawning of the day—the fulness of light which is at length to break, when He, who is "Lord of all," comes in the glory of His kingdom.

[1] Rev. xxi. 1, R.V.

[2] It is only a conceit, a fancy, to say that because Christ's people are called in 1 Cor. iv. 1, ὑπηρέται, they are represented under the figure of a company of rowers, under His command, in the ship of the Church. Yet the fancy is not without its beauty. In a similar way, the Lutheran theologian of the sixteenth century, in his commentary on this chapter of the Gospel, speaks of believers as "Argonautæ Christiani."

But if this be the relation of the Church to the world, what is its relation to its Head? As their great High Priest, He is even now interceding for His people "on the mountain Himself alone." His help therefore is in no sense withdrawn, though His presence is unseen. While they dread the "waves that know no curbing hand," He is in reality near: His eye beholds. And although delaying long, He will come at last, in His own time and way, and at His presence the wild waters of time will become as marble for His feet. As once "the troubled billows knew their Lord, and fell beneath His eye," so will it be at the end of the days. Now, as His disciples during His earthly ministry inquired, "Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?"—so do men still. In this eager and often unchastened desire to know, they have fancied that the answer may be found in this sign, especially in the addition which Matthew and Mark supply, that our Lord's appearance was "in the fourth watch of the night"—that is to say, if we accept the Roman division of time, which the Jews at this date not uncommonly did, in the last watch, the time when darkness is deepest and day-dawn nearest.[1] All such speculations, however, as to His Time are futile, and tend to be hurtful. It is enough that when He does come, "walking on the sea"—"treading upon the waves of the sea," He will bring confidence to His trembling people—peace and joy at last. Amid the awful solemnities of His approach, He will talk with them, in accents

[1] Hilary says: "The first watch of the night was the age of the Law; the second, of the Prophets; the third, of the Gospel; the fourth of His glorious Advent." This view cannot be accepted as in any way legitimately to be taken out of the passage.

which their hearts will understand, "It is I; be not afraid." Then

> "Shall the Church, His bright and mystic bride,
> Sit on the stormy gulf, a halcyon bird of calm."

Rather, it will have reached the waveless haven—the calm harbour of everlasting peace—

> "When the shore is won at last,
> Who will count the billows past?"

Thus without committing ourselves to see meanings in minute details, but simply surrendering ourselves to the general suggestions of this sign, and in so doing keeping company with commentators of every age and school, we see the pledge of our Lord's protecting care of His Church on earth, and the foretaste of its security and bliss in heaven.

VI.

"He stood before the Sanhedrim;
The scowling rabbis gazed at him.
He recked not of their praise or blame;
There was no fear, there was no shame
For one upon whose dazzled eyes
The whole world poured its vast surprise.
The open heaven was far too near,
His first day's light too sweet and clear,
To let him waste his new-gained ken
On the hate-clouded face of men.

. . . . . .

The man they jeered and laughed to scorn
Was unlearned, poor, and humbly born;
But he knew better far than they,
What came to him that Sabbath-day;
And what the Christ had done for him
He knew, and not the Sanhedrim."

HAY.

"Quid est hoc, Domine? Magnam quæstionem fessis intulisti; sed erige vires nostras, ut possimus intelligere quod dixisti, Venisti ut qui non vident videant; recte, quia lumen es; recte, quia dies es; recte, quia de tenebris liberas. Hoc omnis anima accipit, omnis anima intelligit."

AUGUSTIN, *in loc.*

THE HEALING OF THE MAN BORN BLIND.

THE HEALING OF THE MAN BORN BLIND.

(John ix.)

I. THE EXPOSITION.

PARALLEL with the three miracles, which are recorded in the fourth Gospel as wrought in Galilee, we have the narrative of other three wrought in Judæa. The first of these is the healing of the impotent man at Bethesda. The second now comes under discussion. The third and greatest is the raising of Lazarus from the dead. In these three signs whereby the divine glory of the Son of God is manifested, in accordance with His own declaration, "the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, and the dead are raised up," we see the higher, the spiritual blessings of His kingdom.

The narrative opens thus: "And as He passed by, He saw a man blind from his birth." If we retain the reading of the Authorised Version in the closing verse of the preceding chapter, we are led necessarily to conclude that this miracle was wrought just as our Lord was leaving the temple and passing through the city unrecognised. Upon the whole, this conclusion seems justified, even with the reading of the Revised Version. We have to assume, then, that there is no gap existing between the two chapters; and that this work of power and the discourse of chap. viii. belong to the same Sabbath day. Our Lord had just forsaken the temple, His Father's house, leaving the Jews in

possession of it, but deprived by their own perversity of the blessing which pertained to it. And straightway an opportunity presented itself to illustrate in the region of nature what He had just said to them in regard to the kingdom of grace, "I am the Light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life."[1]

The whole incident is set before us with the vivid naturalness of perfect, unstudied simplicity. Critics have frequently noted this as a conclusive evidence of the Johannean authorship of this Gospel. The unsurpassed directness—the entire absence of elaboration with which the shifting scenes and the dialogues are reproduced, testifies to the work of an eye-witness. Of course, descriptive skill can imagine situations and conversations, and portray them in liveliest colouring. But in this case we instinctively feel that we are introduced to no poetic romance in which art is striving to lend the charm of reality to what is fictitious. All is unadorned and entirely destitute of effort. We are not dealing with a poet who is giving play to his imagination, or an artist who is striving after realistic effect, but with an honest narrator who has no other aim than simply to record what is fact. Dr. Sanday has called this chapter "Admirably fresh and lifelike history."[2] How tranquil and calm is our Lord's demeanour, even after the violence and danger to which He has immediately before been exposed! There is no element of *ἀταξία*—disorder or trepidation—in Him. His eye turns aside from the hostile tumult in perfect calmness, and rests compassionately on one

[1] viii. 12.

[2] On this point, *vid.* Luthardt, *Der Johanneische Ursprung des vierten Evangelium*, p. 140.

who has no eyes himself to see. This "man blind from his birth"—a well-known object of charity—probably had his accustomed station in the neighbourhood of the temple, possibly even within one of its spacious porches, proclaiming to all who passed by the misery of his life-long malady. The Divine Healer, the good Samaritan, unlike the Priest and the Levite, paused and determined to cure. The disciples, who may have been separated from Him during the uproar in the temple, and may have now rejoined Him outside, noticing His fixed gaze of pity, ask Him, "Rabbi, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind?" It is not the overflow of sympathy in their hearts, but rather the pressure of perplexity in their minds, that prompts the question. Perhaps recalling the utterance in the case of the impotent man healed at Bethesda, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing befall thee,"[1] they at once conclude that this instance of suffering is retributive; and yet, they ask, how can it be so? Here then there presented itself a speculative question of overpowering interest; what has their Master to say about it? They will venture to ask, addressing Him appropriately in such a case, as Nicodemus did, by the title of Rabbi. Here was a metaphysical inquiry which had occurred to the plain and unlettered men—His disciples, who companied with Him. "A metaphysical doubt to fishermen! Yes; and if you go into the garrets and cellars of London, you will have metaphysical doubts presented to you by men immeasurably more ignorant than those fishermen were, even before Jesus called them; the very doubts which the schools are occupied with, only taking a living practical form. Unless you can cause

[1] Chap. v. 14.

men not to be metaphysical beings,—that is to say, unless you can take from them all which separates them from the beasts that perish,—they must have these doubts."[1] The question then, so natural, indeed, so inevitable, whenever problems of this kind appear, is, in the form in which it is here put, full of perplexity. What is the idea underlying it? Some say, the belief in the transmigration of souls. According to this view the possibility is assumed, in one of the alternatives, of this man's having sinned in some previous state of existence, and his expiating that sin in his present state. But this doctrine, widespread as it was in ancient systems of philosophy, is not known to have had any hold of Jewish theological thought; even Wordsworth's lines would have appeared alien to Jewish conceptions—

> "Our birth is but a sleep, and a forgetting;
> The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
> Hath had elsewhere its setting,
> And cometh from afar."

Holzmann, however, in favouring this view, has acutely linked on this question of the disciples to what their Master had just asserted in the hearing of His Jewish opponents, and in their own. He had just declared, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."[2] He had thus asserted His own pre-existence. They therefore now say in effect, as to "this man,"[3] may not pre-existence be ascribed to him too; and is the solution of his suffering to be sought therein? This ingenious explanation is too far-fetched to commend itself, not to speak of its savouring of something like disrespect to Christ Himself, in placing His pre-existence alongside that of

[1] Maurice, *in loc.* [2] viii. 58. [3] οὗτος, emphatic.

others. Some, again, hold that the disciples assume a divine foreknowledge, that this man would be guilty of some great sin, and hence the divine decree that his punishment should go before its commission. This utterly unnatural view we instinctively reject; and specially do we recoil from attributing it to the disciples. The supposition of a possible sinning in the womb is more in accordance with Jewish subtleties; but, it too, may safely be set aside as fantastic, and very unlikely to have occurred to simple-minded men. The same objection may be advanced against the view that the disciples designedly attempted to overthrow altogether the common idea of the connection between sin and suffering—that they tried to show that this connection could not stand investigation—that it actually involved, in such a case as that of "a man blind from his birth," a plain absurdity. We cannot conceive the disciples thus trying to entangle their revered Master in such dialectic meshes. They were too trustful and docile to offer Him this implied disrespect.

It is therefore better, upon the whole, to suppose, as most accredited expositors do, that the disciples did not themselves at once see the confusion of thought that their question involved. True to the instincts of the universal human heart, when they saw suffering, they thought of its root in sin. But at once they are plunged into intellectual difficulties and inconsistencies whenever they sought to see individual sins in individual sufferings. They are then immediately beyond their depth. Our Lord's answer is eminently instructive—"Neither did this man sin, nor his parents," in any direct or special way, "but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." He at once discourages idle speculation of this kind as out of

place, especially in the immediate presence of suffering. Hence, setting aside the point proposed to Him for discussion and solution, He directs His disciples' thoughts into an altogether different channel, namely, as to the good that may come out of suffering. He thus shifts the inquiry from the barren region of speculation to the more fruitful region of practical morals. To try to discover God's design in the mysteries and anomalies of human suffering, is far less profitable than to try to learn what of duty human suffering suggests. He leads His questioners in this way, as He also leads us, to look forward rather than backward—to ask about the end of evil rather than about its origin. How it came about is a perplexing question; how good may rise out of it is a profitable one. Here is one point of view, He would say, in the presence of this man's calamity, from which it may be usefully contemplated; it is the occasion for the manifestation of "the works of God."[1] Thus, while the problem of the origin of evil stands just where it was, as far as Christ's words are concerned, a comforting light is thrown upon it: God's glory, it is declared, will be manifested therein—not only "the works of God," but, as we have it in the parallel case of the sickness of Lazarus,[2] in these words, "the Son of God will be glorified." Then, reminded by the whole circumstances of the case of His own mission into the world, and the shortness of the time allotted Him for its accomplishment, He exclaims—the words sound like a soliloquy, as He turns His thoughts within—

[1] Following Hemsen, Wordsworth calls attention to the fact that ἵνα does not indicate here the *cause*, but the *effect*, *i.e.* the man was not born blind in order that God might be glorified, but God's glory was an effect of his blindness.

[2] xi. 4.

"We must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day, the night cometh, when no man can work." Day and night represent, it cannot be doubted, in this connection simply life and death — life, the time of activity—ceaseless energy in appointed work; death, the time when the day of such activity is past. Our Lord thus contemplates the approaching end of His earthly ministry. The shades of evening He recognises as beginning to settle down upon the day of His opportunity. The recent outburst of Jewish popular fury against Himself reminds Him of this. The black night of His passion He feels to be drawing near. But He, the Son of man, has still work to do. The circle of His deeds of mercy is not yet complete. He must therefore go forward, unhasting, unresting, in effect saying in regard to Himself, "Man goeth forth to his work until the evening." But the reading of the Revised Version, which substitutes "we" for "I," is not to be overlooked. Even in this holy reverie on His own work, the Son of man lovingly associates His disciples with Himself. He, it is true, is the Sent of God in a sense that stands awfully apart. Yet even while this is so we are represented as closely allied with Him. While it is His mission which is ever being accomplished in the world, we have our share with Him in it. "We must work the works of Him that sent" Christ Jesus. Thus recognising the obligation which He has laid upon us, knowing that with us it is now day and that it will soon be night, we must have no relaxation, no cessation of service, till

> "Death's mild curfew shall from work assoil."

It has been said, "Whoever fears God, fears to sit at ease."

"When I am in the world, I am the light of the world." In this utterance we have the key, as we shall afterwards learn, whereby we may unlock the chamber of imagery of this sign, just as in the case of the raising of Lazarus we have the similar significant declaration, "I am the resurrection and the life."

The Light of the world, in the region of all spiritual life, will now illustrate and confirm His claims by a work of power on the sightless orbs of this blind beggar whose case had arrested His disciples' interest, and powerfully awakened His own compassion. "When He had thus spoken," and in close connection with what He had spoken, "He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and anointed his eyes with the clay." He who at the first dawn of the material creation had said, "Let there be light: and there was light," might have said this now, in one word of royal power fulfilling His own decree. But we do not find it so. There is rather what perhaps we may not exactly call a process of healing, but what is at all events a representation of the use of means in healing. The means chosen are in themselves peculiar. There is no doubt whatever that the saliva of one that is fasting was regarded by the ancient world as possessing healing virtue, more especially in diseases of the eye. It is easy to adduce instances.[1] The story of the so-called miracle wrought by the Roman emperor Vespasian at Alexandria is by far the most remarkable illustration of this. It may bear repetition, more especially as Voltaire has made truculent use of it. Tacitus[2] writes, after referring to the occurrence of

[1] *Vid.* Wetstein and Riehm's *Wörterbuch des biblischen Alterthums*, art. "Speichel."

[2] *Hist.* iv. 81.

many wonders, pointing out Vespasian as the favourite of Heaven: "One of the common people of Alexandria, well known for his blindness, threw himself at the Emperor's knees, and implored him with groans to heal his infirmity. . . . He begged Vespasian that he would deign to moisten his cheeks and eyeballs with his spittle. At first Vespasian ridiculed and repulsed him. . . . At last he ordered that the opinion of physicians should be taken, as to whether such blindness were within the reach of human skill. They said, 'The faculty of sight was not wholly destroyed, and might return if the obstacles were removed.' . . . And so Vespasian, supposing that all things were possible to his good fortune, and that nothing was any longer past belief, with a joyful countenance, amid the intense expectation of the multitude of bystanders, accomplished what was required. The light of day then shone upon the blind. Persons actually present attest the fact, even now, when nothing is to be gained by falsehood." Such is Tacitus' wonderful narrative, which we have reproduced, disentangling it from the other miracle of the healing of a diseased hand, which is also recorded.

Once more, there are instances known of the ancient belief in the medicinal uses of clay. But it is clear that there was no intention on the part of the Divine Healer to use means of this kind, as holding them in common with others to be in themselves efficacious. Why this method of conveying the cure was chosen it is perhaps vain to inquire, either in this case or in the other two of the same kind in Mark vii. 33 and viii. 23. We have, however, some justification for recognising the act as designedly symbolical, signi-

ficantly pointing to the life-giving power which proceeds from the Saviour's mouth, like His breathing upon His disciples, after His resurrection, when He said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." If we cannot altogether accept as strict exposition, we can still profitably listen to Patristic meditation as reproduced by Bishop Wordsworth, in which there is seen in Christ's act the symbol of His incarnation. "The blessings of spiritual illumination are derived from the incarnation of Christ. The first Adam was formed of the clay of the earth, and he derived his name Adam therefrom. He was of the earth earthy. The Son of God, who is 'the Lord from heaven,' became the second Adam, and took our nature of clay; and in it He became the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One; and by virtue of the unction of the Holy Ghost, which He received in that nature, and has poured down upon us, He has regenerated, illumined, and sanctified that nature, which ever since the fall was 'born blind.'" Christ Jesus is then set before us as the true Siloam, the Sent—sent in His incarnation to bless, to purify, by enlightening the world.

The act is accompanied by word—a word of command: "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (which is by interpretation Sent)." The command is at once obeyed.—"He went away and washed, and came seeing." Faith had grown within the man, helped probably as he was by the gentle touch of the Healer's hand upon him. His cheerful, hopeful compliance is a striking contrast to the stubborn refusal in the similar case of Naaman, who "went away in a rage."

But why sent to Siloam? The Evangelist, in his characteristic way, gives explanation. The pool or

brook of Shiloah, near Zion and Moriah, as Milton calls it—

> "Siloë's brook that flowed
> Fast by the oracle of God,"

bore originally its name, Sent, because of its discharge of waters from God's dwelling-place on earth through a subterranean channel. It came to be regarded by the Jews, very naturally from its position, as a type of the gracious Covenant-God of His people enthroned in the temple.[1] But now the significance of the pool's name, with all its hallowed associations, at once flashes upon the Evangelist's mind in connection with this New Testament act of divine grace. That pool appears to him now as a type of His Master. It could not fail to do so. The mind of the whole Jewish people was penetrated with the idea — that Siloam was an emblem of their true religion. It now became to John a clear symbol of Him in whom all true Old Testament religion is fulfilled. He felt that Christ Jesus had designed to use Siloam as significant of Himself—the Sent of God. This view is in exact accord, too, with the announcement which our Lord has just made, "We must work the works of Him that sent Me." Similar experiences, it has been remarked, all emphasising this His being sent of the Father, are found no less than seventeen times in the first nine chapters of this Gospel. If, then, men would seek and find sight spiritually, as this man went to Siloam "and washed and came seeing," so must they repair by faith to Him whom in His incarnation "the Father sanctified and sent into the world"—to Him who is the true fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. Thus alone can they

[1] *Vid.* Cheyne on Isa. viii. 6.

see. "Then shall their light break forth as the morning."[1]

II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SIGN.

This to a certain extent has already unfolded itself in the exposition. It has necessarily done so, the details of the wonder-work being very clearly, and possibly in a very high degree symbolical. The chief aspect, however, in which the incident is to be contemplated comes distinctly into view in two declarations which fall from the Saviour's lips, the one, before the miracle was wrought, ver. 5: "When I am in the world I am the light of the world;"[2] the other, immediately afterwards, ver. 39: "For judgment came I into this world, that they which see not may see; and that they which see may become blind." The whole narrative, with all its changeful lights and shadows, with all its varying moods of dialogue, is an illustration and confirmation of these two announcements. The relation of our Lord and His kingdom to the world — the world in this usage of the word signifies the whole human race, humanity conceived

[1] To many such treatment of a narrative, though it be the narrative of a miracle, the seeing mystical meanings therein is repellant. It appears to them trifling, unworthy of the Evangelist, and unworthy of our sober study of his words. To such objections, it can only be repeated, that the character of the fourth Gospel invites, and indeed demands, such treatment, and that the leading expositors of all ages and of all schools have been the readiest to acknowledge this, and to act upon it.

It is well known that Dressel's discovery and publication of a previously unknown section of the *Clementine Homilies* in 1853 has cut away the ground from the feet of those who denied that the fourth Gospel is quoted in these homilies. Even these scholars themselves now acknowledge with perfect frankness that allusion to the healing of the blind man is plainly to be found there. This fact has great value in relation to the authenticity of this Gospel.

[2] Compare chap. viii. 12.

as one vast and organised and solid company, and that as under the dominion of evil—permeated throughout with the subtle powers of darkness. The Eternal Word is this world's Light. He Himself is "the true light, even the light which lighteth every man coming into the world."[1] He it is who lightens every man by creating him with capacities of reason and conscience — who unknown and unacknowledged has been the indwelling Light of every member of the human race — the true original archetypal Light.[2] But in His incarnation and in His ministry on earth He is in another sense, not merely as He has been called, "That pale rainbow circling Palestine," but the Light-bringer to the whole world. In His self-manifestation, in His words and works, in His passion and death and resurrection, in the sending forth of His Spirit in "the ministry of reconciliation," He has come, and is ever coming, to give to men, as sinners, "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God."[3]

But the second passage—the announcement made to the general company, among whom there were Pharisees[4]— is a very enigmatical one.[5] Christ's coming into this world as its Light is also a coming "for judgment." In the case of those "which see not," that is, those who sorrowfully recognise and acknowledge their ignorance, their blindness as to spiritual things,

[1] Chap. i. 9.
[2] "Das Urlicht der Wahrheit," de Wette.
[3] 2 Cor. iv. 6.
[4] Ver. 39.
[5] The concluding verses of the chapter contain a saying which is thoroughly in the manner of the Synoptists, and has a parallel as regards its substance in Matt. xi. 25, 26, and frequently as regards the metaphor "blind" applied to the Pharisees (cf. Matt. xv. 14, xxiii. 16, 17, 24). It also supplies a warranty for ascribing a typical significance to miracles. Sanday, *Authorship and Historical Character of the Fourth Gospel*, p. 165.

and with earnest desire turn to the Light, they see;[1] their inner eye is opened to discern spiritual realities. On the other hand, in the case of those "which see," that is, those who pride themselves on their knowledge —who, satisfied with their spiritual attainment, feeling their need of nothing, scornfully reject the Light, wilfully turn away from it, they "become blind"— "their senseless heart is darkened,"[2] "being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart,"[3] their blindness as to spiritual things is confirmed—changed into utter darkness.[4] Such is our Lord's own declaration in closest connection with the miracle which bestowed sight upon the man that had been born blind. Its parallel in substance is found in Matt. xi. 25: "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes." The "wise and understanding" correspond with "they which see"; the "babes," with "they which see not." The saying illustrates and explains the twofold result of the development of Christ's cause upon earth. The so-called blind see, and the so-called seeing become blind. Now, having these two opposite issues, the coming of the Saviour into the world is seen to be "for judgment." A formal and real distinction or separation is established between men by the very appearing of Him who is "the Light of the world." A judicial severance is made by Him who is Supreme Judge, and

[1] Cf. Rev. iii. 18. [2] Rom. i. 21. [3] Eph. iv. 18.

[4] The delicate distinction between μὴ βλέποντες, they who see not, in the first clause, designating a vision *not yet* developed, and τυφλοί, blind, in the second, designating the total blindness resulting from the destruction of the organ of sight, should be remarked. Godet.

yet at the same time it is a judgment which each man pronounces upon himself. The result of the proclamation of the truth is a judgment in favour of those who accept, and in condemnation of those who reject.[1]

It may be supposed that there is a discrepancy between this passage and the declaration in chap. xii. 47: "I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." But the contradiction is only on the surface. Our Lord, at His first advent to earth, did not appear in the character of a Judge. He came to exercise, not the office of a Judge, but that of a Saviour. None the less it lies in the essential nature of things that the direct effect of His coming, in relation to men as free agents, is the salvation of some, the condemnation of others. That is judgment or severance. We find the best comment on this in the latter part of our Lord's own discourse with Nicodemus.[2] We are there told that God sent His Son into the world on an errand, not of wrath, but of mercy—"Not to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him." Such is the divine purpose, and there is no other; but it is added: "He that believeth on Him hath been judged already, because He hath not believed on the name of the only-begotten Son of God." He who wilfully and persistently rejects the divine mercy in Christ Jesus, as offered in the gospel, is declared by the Saviour's own loving lips to be "judged already." And what is this judgment? It is described in language which is

[1] The word is κρίμα, the concrete result, as opposed to κρίσις, the act of judging. κρίμα is "das richterliche Urtheil, der Gerichtsspruch," Keil. But Lücke, while accepting this distinction, has right in calling attention to the absence of the article, and the construction of the clause with ἵνα, as bringing the meaning of κρίμα nearer to that of simple κρίσις than otherwise it would be.

[2] John iii. 17–21.

closely parallel with that of this chapter. "This is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil." Like the natural light of the sun, He, the self-evidencing Light, has come to dispel—to chase away the darkness of sin. But, wedded to their sins, those who reject Him prefer their own congenial darkness to the Light which makes their evil works manifest, and which reproves them.

Now these opposite processes, which are ceaselessly going on, are illustrated with peculiar vividness in all the incidents which followed upon the curing of the man born blind. These incidents, indeed, are recorded for the very purpose of setting forth this twofold issue. "That they which see not may see," is exemplified in the case of the blind man himself. He is an instance of a soul "going through an entirely natural development."[1] The beginning with him is the receiving of a mere bodily blessing. Having willingness, a singular readiness to do what is enjoined upon him, he went at once to Siloam and washed, and returned seeing. But as yet his Benefactor is nothing more to him than "the man that is called Jesus." It is in this way he describes Him to the inquiring and wondering neighbours as they wrangled about his identity, bewildered, probably, by the change that had passed over him; for "the opening of his eyes had altered his countenance."[2] But this lowest stage of intelligence is soon abandoned. He rapidly advances to something of spiritual insight. He is brought before the Pharisees. These Jewish authorities are in a state of complete embarrassment about the matter. Punctilious about their Sabbath law, which they had managed by their absurdities

[1] Luthardt. [2] Augustine.

to caricature, passing over the miracle itself as far as possible in silence, and emphasising with all possible malignity the supposed Sabbath-breaking, they showed that there was a division among them. But the blind man whom they rudely interrogated is far ahead of them in his opinions. He unfalteringly declares of his healer, "He is a prophet." This conviction has taken firm possession of his soul. His own grateful meditation has led him thus far on the right path. But he advances still. His inquisitors, getting no satisfaction from him, turn to his parents. These are naturally timid, and their timidity makes them crafty and reticent. Cautious, and even cowardly, in the presence of men who are powerful to do them injury, they will in no way commit themselves. Hence the man himself is once more summoned. A second time he declares, while disclaiming all theological skill, simply that which is within his own knowledge and experience. Whatever he does not know, he says, "One thing I (do) know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." "This was his full heart's only lore." But on this firm footing he fights a winning battle with his questioners. With sturdy courage he confronts them, and discerning their malice repels their assaults even with irony and scorn. A man, he reasons, who could do this work of power is no sinner; he is one who stands in right relation to God, else God would not hear him. Jesus, therefore, he fearlessly declares, is "from God." Such is his confession. In its simplicity and assurance, more especially in the presence of powerful and malicious foes, it stands almost unrivalled. By the simple inherent force of truth this blind beggar, forlorn and unlettered, gains a true victory both for himself and

for his Lord. This lesson has been borne in upon his spirit—

> "Stand upright, speak thy thought, declare
> The truth thou hast that all may share;
> Be bold, proclaim it everywhere:
> They only live who dare."[1]

But there is yet a higher stage of spiritual attainment to be reached by him. Jesus finds him after he has been cast out, and graciously asks, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?"[2] The man, whose natural disposition is evidently that of openness of mind, and readiness to follow whither his convictions point, says: "And who is He, Lord, that I may believe on Him?" Then comes the all-revealing answer: "Thou hast both seen Him, and He it is that speaketh with thee." With the newly-bestowed gift of bodily sight he had seen Him whom with the eye of the heart he now sees and recognises as the Son of God. He offers the tribute of adoration to Him whom his soul loveth. "He said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped Him." Such, then, is the path of progress, very clearly defined in the narrative, of the man towards spiritual enlightenment. Formally excommunicated, he is the first of that band of faithful witnesses of whom his Master has said, "They shall put you out of the synagogues." But this expulsion is nothing, less than nothing, to one who has become the earliest confessor in the new kingdom.

He who saw not now sees—

> "Und was kein Verstand der verständigen sieht,
> Das übet in Einfalt ein kindlich Gemüth."[3]

---

[1] Lewis Morris, *Songs of Two Worlds*. Courage.

[2] Westcott, however, in *Speaker's Commentary*, strongly advocates the reading "Son of man."

[3] Schiller, *Die Worte des Glaubens*.

"His reasoning was so plain and easy that it was like that of a child; yet so vast and sublime, that it could comprehend the throne of God; so humble, that it could worship at the feet of One rejected of men; so great, that it was united unto God; so slow to comprehend, that it understood not the learning of the scribes; so rapid in the intuitive perception of truth, that he passed before all prophets and wise men and scribes into the kingdom of God."[1] How is all this? The answer is simply, as Augustine has put it, "Laverat faciem corporis, modo lavat faciem cordis." Of every one who has undergone this change from darkness to light it can be said—

> "Whoso has felt the Spirit of the Highest
> Cannot confound, nor doubt Him, nor deny:
> Yea, with one voice, O world, tho' thou deniest,
> Stand thou on that side, for on this am I."[2]

Thus our Lord in this sign stands forth as the Light of the world—giving spiritual illumination to those who see not. But there is the other side of His mission. Judgment, as we have seen, means separation. And this incident exhibits this separation in action. The Pharisees, who see, become blind. Having in their outward keeping the key of knowledge, they believed that they saw. No sense of ignorance rested on their spirits. Hence the very presence of Him who is Light only darkened them the more. Blind upholders of their traditions, their disputes and questionings revealed only their folly. In view of the clearest evidences of Christ's mission, they saw in Him only a sinner. "How," they exclaimed, "can a man that is a sinner do such signs?" They had already made up

[1] Isaac William, *Devotional Commentary, in loc.*
[2] F. W. H. Myers, *St. Paul.*

their minds against Him. We are told "the Jews had agreed already, that if any man should confess Him to be Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue;" there was therefore no enlightenment, but only mental and spiritual blindness in store for them. We *know*, they said, "that this man is a sinner." As Moses' disciples, they never doubted, whatever they might think about others, that they themselves saw. "As for this man," they further said, "we *know not* whence He is." This ignorance or blindness was the very fancied knowledge they boasted of. Thus cased in prejudice, unapproachable to conviction, in their baffled rage against the new convert to Christ, "they cast him out." The act was the casting of themselves out into the darkness into which no light comes. "They which saw became blind."

On hearing our Lord's enigmatical saying, and yet turning a deaf ear to it, they cried in their unbelief and scorn, "Are we also blind?" The answer is one of doom. Better to be blind; better to be in humble ignorance, however great, for there is hope in that. But for those who, wise in their own conceit, say, "We see," thus claiming for themselves, as it were, a monopoly of spiritual insight, their sin with its guilt remaineth. Or to put it otherwise, "Were you but blind without guilt! But in your pride you claim to see, and therefore reject, the true Light. That is guilty blindness, which is not healed; it is sin, and remains."[1]

[1] Schmidt and Holzendorff's *Short Protestant Commentary on New Testament*. Following Beda, Cornelius a Lapide and Maldonatus see in the blind man the representative of the Gentiles, and in the Pharisees the representative of the Jews; the former accepted, the latter rejected. Scholten, a commentator of an entirely different school, looking at the matter from an opposite point of view, reaches the same conclusion. There is not much, however, to be said in support of it.

Thus it appears that this sign shows Christ Jesus in His spiritual agency as the Light of the world. Wherever He in His truth is manifested there is judgment.[1] It has been well said: "With the appearance of Christ the separation of men begins. On the trees of the same forest all kinds of birds take shelter together during the night. But in the morning, as soon as the sun shoots her rays thither, some close their eyes and seek the darkest retreat, while others shake their wings and salute the sun with their songs. So the appearing of Christ separates the lovers of the day from the lovers of the night, mingled till then in the mass of mankind." So is it ever till the time of the end.

[1] "Nicht umsonst hat Christus gesagt; 'Ich bin das Licht der Welt,' nicht bloss dieses und jenes Einzelnen. Er beleuchtet den Weltzustand elbst und macht ihn hell," Rothe, *Stille Stunden*.

VII.

"Conscius insignis facti locus in Bethania,
Vidit ab inferna te, Lazare, sede reversum.
Apparet scissum fractis foribus monumentum,
Unde putrescentis redierunt membra sepulti."

PRUDENTIUS, *Diptychon*, XXXVIII.

"Folding all human sorrow in His heart,
Our heavenly Master groaned in spirit; shook,
A-tremble with that vast love, gathering
Against His breast all such as weep on earth."

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD, *The Light of the World.*

THE RAISING OF LAZARUS.

THE RAISING OF LAZARUS.

(John xi.)

I. THE EXPOSITION.

WE stand now in the presence of the greatest and most instructive of our Lord's signs. He is declared thereby to be in truth what Simon the sorcerer falsely claimed to be, "the great power of God." Not only in itself, but also in its consequences, further, it is the most momentous of all the miracles. It rendered the breach between Christ and His foes complete. "From that day forth they took counsel that they might put Him to death." Hence the life of Lazarus was the death of Christ.[1] The narrative, in the minuteness and fulness of its details, in its rapid changes of mood, in its ever shifting emotions, is invested with much of dramatic interest. Strauss has well described its author, whoever he may have been, as a veritable Correggio, a master of light and shade; and Herder has given his verdict thus: "The lovely story is so softly troubled[2] and so confidingly told, that its words seem to drop as the still, early dew from off the flowers."

As in the first sign, so in this the last, the reader is at once introduced into the sanctities of family life. But these sanctities are flooded, not with joy, but with grief. "A certain man was sick." He had been assailed, it may be, by one of the sudden, sharp, and

[1] "Vita Lazari, mors Christi," Corn. a Lapide. [2] Betrübt.

frequently fatal fevers of Palestine; and it is implied that the assault had assumed an alarming form. His name was Lazarus, a contracted form of Eleazar. We meet with it in the parable, which has several startling points of contrast with this miracle, depicting, as it does, the rich man's desire that Lazarus might be commissioned, as a *revenant* from the other world, to testify on behalf of truth to the dwellers on earth. The name means, The helped of God,—the German *Gotthilf*,—a significant name for one whose help so signally was to be displayed as coming solely from the Lord. It is to be noticed, however, that the Evangelist guards against the misapprehension which the meaning of the name and its previous use in the parable might occasion. The present Lazarus is no fictitious figure, he is a real personage: he is "Lazarus of Bethany." Such was his distinctive designation. Further, he belonged to "the village of Mary and her sister Martha." This village, not to be confounded with the "Bethany beyond Jordan,"[1] is inseparably associated with our Lord's ministry. There gather around it the most endearing memories of the Son of man. "House of Poverty" it probably means, because, though nestling among olive trees, it lay solitary and still on the borders of the desert, stretching towards the East; and also, it has been thought, because it was the chosen residence of outcast lepers and other sufferers.[2] The poor present-day representative of the village is called El-Azarieh, a reminiscence of Lazarus. In the Evangelist's memory it is chiefly cherished as the village of the sister-pair, especially of Mary, who was henceforth

1 Chap. i. 28.

2 *Vid.* Schenkel's *Bibel-Lexikon*, *sub voce*, and Wichelhaus, *Leidensgeschichte*, p. 69.

to be known by that act of hers which her Lord Himself declared would be her everlasting memorial, when on the stones she broke the box of ointment—

> "And from the ruined fragments poured forth all
> Over His feet, with many a fervent kiss,
> Adoring and anointing." [1]

It was, perchance, a thank-offering this for her brother's restored life, as well as a presentiment of her Lord's approaching death.[2]

Luke, in his notice of the Bethany family circle, has given us what we may call the prologue to this narrative, and its beautiful traits of character reappear here. This might be set forth in great minuteness of detail.[3] "Lazarus was sick. The sister therefore sent unto Him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick." The bodily ailment of their brother had its perfect work in them, in that it drew their anxious hearts the more closely to their truest Friend. In extremity the sympathy and counsel and aid of the Good Physician are sought, though how these are to be given is as yet unknown. The message itself we instinctively conceive to be Mary's, though the sending of it may more probably have been Martha's care. In its form, while it says little, it implies much; it demands nothing, yet it pleads for all. It gives no description of the illness, either as to its kind or as to its degree; no word of murmuring or of dictation finds a place in it. It is a mere statement of fact, and there-

[1] Sir Edwin Arnold's *Light of the World.*

[2] "*Which anointed.*" The past tense which the Evangelist employs points out, not the time of the incident to which he alludes, but the time when he wrote. This is the Mary, he would say, who afterwards anointed the Lord with ointment. The conjecture has nothing in its favour that we have here Mary Magdalene, or the woman that was a sinner.

[3] Bishop Lightfoot has done so in the *Expositor*, 1890, p. 182.

in lies the urgency of its unspoken prayer. So it often is. St. Bernard says: "Tanquam non orantes, oramus."[1]

Not "He whom we love," not "He who loves Thee," but "He whom Thou lovest;" it was the Saviour's love for him, and nothing else, that inspired confidence. His love! this gave them the right to rest on Him. To remind Him of this, His own love, is to make the strongest appeal to His heart.

"But when Jesus heard it, He said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby." It is an entire mistake to regard the latter clause here as the Evangelist's comment. It is the continuation of our Lord's own declaration. Nor are we to take this exclamation as an actual reply to the sisters' message. It does not seem to have been spoken directly to the messengers at all, nor even to the disciples. These latter, indeed, heard it. But while uttered in their hearing, it was a soliloquy—the voice of rapt prophetic contemplation. In its wide and enduring significance it is spoken to all His people, and for all time.

But it is a perplexing utterance. "Not unto death," and yet the angel of death had already entered that dwelling. Yes, but death was not the final stage, nor was it the final design of the illness. The visitation of sickness was rather *unto*—tending towards—a sign, recognising which men, through faith on Christ, might escape eternal death. The idea of death is not excluded

[1] "Non dixerunt; Veni: Amanti tantummodo nunciandum fuit. Non ausæ sunt dicere: Veni et sana; non ausæ sunt dicere; Ibi jube, et hic fiet; cur enim non et istæ, si fides illius centurionis inde laudatur? Ait enim: Domine non sum dignus, ut intres sub tectum meum, sed tantum dic verbo, et sanabitur puer meus. Nihil horum istæ, sed tantummodo: Domine, ecce, quem amas, infirmatur: sufficit, ut noveris; non enim amas et deseris," Augustin. *Tract.* 49.

from the declaration, but the continuing therein is. Such, then, was the strange diagnosis, one that no earthly physician could ever make. The sickness, even in its fatal issue, was "for the glory of God," and that, too, as manifested in God's Son. His own glory and that of God are not distinct, as His Jewish foes maintained, but one. The works of God are manifest in Him. Here, too, we find that our Lord, who so constantly spoke of Himself as the Son of man, claiming our humanity in things relating to God, calls Himself the Son of God in things relating to men, that so men may the more readily trust in His divine power. This His glory, further, as in the first miracle, so also here, is to be seen in a work of power, and in all the spiritual blessings which it typified and foretold. This declaration, therefore, is the first suggestion of the key whereby the whole sign is unlocked and its treasure of teaching disclosed.

And now we come upon the interjected announcement, "Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." The household possessed the supreme gift of His all-perfect love. The immediate token of this, however, was not at once to appear. The assurance is given as if it were a call to suspend our judgment on what follows. "When, therefore (the 'therefore' is merely continuative), He heard that he was sick, He abode at that time in the place where He was." That is to say, He still tarried in Peræa, apparently heedless of the message, and indifferent as to the friends who had sent it. Why the delay of these two weary days? The emphatic declaration of His tenderest regard for that family circle seems expressly designed to guard against a wrong answer. The explanation seems to lie in part in the much work He had to do "where He

was"—a region which he was not likely to revisit—a work, too, with which even the urgency of friendship could not interfere. From chap. x.40–42 we learn that an open door of more than common usefulness had just been set before Him. But this, while it may account for the delay in going to Bethany, does not explain the delay in helping. His personal presence was surely not needed. By a mere word spoken at a distance He had previously arrested disease and made the sick whole. Why, then, did such a word remain unspoken now? The explanation doubtless is found in ver. 4. Not only His friend's sickness, but also His own delay in regard to it, had one and the same aim—"the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby." The delay enhanced the glory of the sign, while it had its further influence for good on the sisters' hearts. The withholding for a time of the boon craved, increased its preciousness when it was at length bestowed. It also led the disciples themselves to a clearer, stronger faith —a faith fitted to stand them in good stead in the approaching "hour and power of darkness." Our Lord said to them, as we learn from ver. 15, "I am glad *for your sakes* that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe." It is in such lights as these that the lingering in Peræa becomes intelligible. Our Lord still in His dealings with His people, for wise and loving ends, has His seasons and His delays.[1] It is not always true of Him, that "he who gives quickly gives twice." It is enough to be assured that His time is always, for His Church and for the individual believer, the best time.

But at length delay gives place to haste. "Then after this He saith to the disciples, Let us go into Judæa again." "Let us go," He said; but He did not

[1] Habet Dominus suas horas et moras.

say 'to Bethany,' rather "unto Judæa." Not the village, the friendly restful slopes of Olivet, but Judæa, the region of unrest and hostility, is suggested. The word "again" further recalled danger to the disciples' minds as once more to be encountered. Hence what is thus hinted at in their Master's words is bluntly expressed in theirs—"Rabbi, the Jews were but now seeking to stone Thee; and goest Thou thither again?" It is too much to say, as Manton does, that this was the utterance of "the true genius of carnal fear." But it is not too much to say that it was a remonstrance born of fear; yet that fear itself was born of loving devotion. Their Lord had quite recently escaped Jewish violence. He had done so by retiring to the very district where He now was. Why, then, they naturally asked, risk danger anew by returning? There was something in this appeal to commend; but there was also much to reprove. There was the element of distrust in their Leader's wisdom and power. There was also lack of courage in themselves. They feared for themselves as well as for Him. It was Thomas who gave expression to the general feeling—"Let us also go, that we may die with Him."[1] His individual and characteristic utterance unveiled the thought of all. Their pleading for their Master's safety was also a pleading for their own. "It is but a cleanly colour that they put upon their own fear. This is held but a weak and base passion; each would be glad to put off the opinion of it from himself, and to set the best face upon his own impotency."[2] But in all such instances of hesitation and reluctance, the voice of the porter at the Beautiful Palace of Bunyan's dream is ever calling, "Fear not the lions; for they are chained, and are placed there for

[1] Ver. 16. [2] Bishop Hall.

the trial of faith where it is, and for the discovery of those that have none. Keep in the midst of the path, and no hurt shall come unto thee." It is exactly this voice of mingled reproof and encouragement and direction that is heard in our Lord's reply—"Are there not twelve hours in the day? If a man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because the light is not in him." The words are enigmatical. They form what has been called "a parable of human action," reminding us substantially of the similar declaration in chap. ix. 4. The twelve hours of the working day represent the space of time assigned by God to each man for his life-work. A man may safely go forward to every duty pertaining to that life-work so long as that time lasts. He cannot stumble in it, because, like the day-worker with the natural sunlight, he has light from on high to brighten his path. But it is otherwise when he walks "in the night," that is, when the allotted time is past. Then there is no light for the eye to apprehend. There is no longer security. So it was with Christ Jesus Himself—safe till the twelve hours of His earthly ministry were over. Then there gathered around him the thick night—the darkness of His betrayal and passion. This explanation, one out of several, though it halts somewhat, seems, upon the whole, the best. At all events, this parable, as we might call it, has its reference, not only to our Lord Himself, but also to His disciples. Its aim is to allay their natural apprehension of evil—to show them that in every path of duty "he that walketh uprightly walketh surely."[1]

And now there comes the announcement, "Our

[1] Prov. x. 9.

friend Lazarus is fallen asleep." In the light of our Lord's saying, "Ye are My friends if ye do the things which I command you," Lazarus here wears the noblest of all titles. His character stands forth bright as the sun. His Lord's friendship for him is announced even now as stretching beyond the portals of the tomb. "*Our* friend," a gentle reproof to the disciples whose selfish timidity had made them forgetful of friendship's dues. *Our* friend, therefore let *us* hasten to him. But "fallen asleep:" entirely misunderstanding the allusion, they exclaimed, "Lord, if he is fallen asleep he will recover." This slowness of apprehension of theirs was natural, for He had Himself said, "This sickness is not unto death." Still they might have understood the hint conveyed in the words which followed, "but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep." But again we have to remember that the figure of sleep,—the blessed euphemism for death,—though not unknown to Jewish and Gentile modes of thought, was far from being then in common use, as it is now. It had no familiar sound in their ears, even although they had heard it from their Teacher's lips before. They therefore simply supposed that their friend had fallen into a beneficial slumber, or, at most, that some healing virtue had gone forth to him from their Lord at a distance. Yet even here once more their craven unwillingness to return to Judæa betrays itself. In effect they said, Lazarus is doing well; let us therefore stay where we are. We can almost imagine a shadow of deeper sorrow passing over our Lord's countenance as He proceeded to translate His declaration into plain, direct, prosaic words—"Lazarus is dead." Now they on their part could sorrowfully exclaim, "Lo, now speakest Thou plainly, and speakest no parable."

Death had been called a sleep in this case, as in the parallel case of Jairus' daughter, because there was to be an immediate awakening. But there is the further reason, that all Christ's friends, when their day's work is done, simply fall asleep. They do nothing more; they rest unto rising.[1]

After the plain announcement of Lazarus' death there follow words of mystery—"And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe: nevertheless let us go unto him." While the disciples' hearts are full of forebodings, the Master's heart is glad. Detecting in their looks and demeanour possibly something of reproach in that His help had apparently so needlessly been delayed, He declares this gladness of His to be connected with their own best interests. The work of power, which the delay only served to herald and enhance, is to become to them a sign whereby they are to advance to higher and heartier faith. For them the clear and placid joy of assured confidence is to flower out from the bitter root of anxious sorrow. "I am glad that I was not there;" the exclamation seems to imply that, had *He* been there, *death* would not have been there. Such was the sisters' own cherished conviction. "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died," was Martha's greeting, half welcome and half complaint. She felt assured that in His presence the shadow of death could not fall. May we not hold this to be true, that in the immediate presence of Him who is the incarnate Life of the world, no child of earth could actually die,—that for Him to be near was for the enemy, death, to stay his approach? So, at least, many

[1] *Vid.* the author's *Lectures on the Epistles to the Thessalonians*, 1 Thess. v. 8. Bengel says, "Somnus est piorum mors, cœlesti lingua."

have held. This, at all events, we do know, that no case is recorded in which any one did die in His presence. The robbers who were crucified with Him died after He had "given up the ghost." True, the adversary, "who has the power of death," did at the last, in "the hour and power of darkness," thrust his sting even into His side. Death did invade Him who was the very citadel of life; but in that apparent triumph there lay death's actual and utter overthrow. Still, till "the twelve hours in the day" of our Lord's earthly ministry, death appears to have had no actual triumph in His immediate presence. Death's power was fettered before Him "in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Hence our Lord rejoiced that He was not in the household of Bethany, —that before He entered it sickness had done its fatal work,—for thus out of it a new joy was to arise within that dwelling "like a summer's morn." "Nevertheless, let us go unto him." "Unto him," not "unto the sisters"—unto him,—even the tenement of clay, yet to be again inhabited by the friend who had gone. The weak-hearted disciples felt their timidity and distrust abashed before their Lord's resolution. "Let us go," He said, Himself knowing, as they did not, all that awaited Him. He was, even while about to give life, entering on the way of death. But "He was not rebellious, neither turned away back." Still, while not venturing to offer any further opposition, they were by no means at ease. They were silenced, but not satisfied. The bearing of one of their number throws some light upon them all. "Thomas, therefore, who is called Didymus, said unto his fellow-disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with Him." That true but moody and self-willed disciple—"the melancholy

realist," as Keim happily calls him, speaks out characteristically. His is an altogether despairing view of the situation. In his gloomy perversity he sees nothing but ruin in the near future; yet in this very despondency the intrepidity of his love stands forth all the brighter. He has no thought of deserting his master. "Let us also go, that we may die with Him." Let us remain in His company in death as we have done in life.[1] This warm-hearted utterance of Thomas was apparently spoken aside—it was meant, not for Christ, but for "the fellow-disciples," and may have breathed forth even something of annoyance as mingling with his devotion. Here Thomas, as we find in other allusions to him, appears as having a certain dualism inherent in his nature. Faith and unbelief, timidity and courage, seem perversely to unite in him. His soul is the battle-ground of contending forces. His heart is, as the Psalmist has it, "divided." He may, in this respect, though not in others, be regarded as "the double-minded man," who is "unstable in all his ways."[2] Such, then, being his well-defined temperament, has his name, it has been asked, anything to do with it? Now the Hebrew word "Thomas" is not known definitely as a recognised proper name. It simply means "twin:" and the Evangelist, on the three occasions in which he alludes to this disciple, always takes care to tell his readers the meaning of the name by giving its Greek equivalent, Didymus. It would thus appear that the name was assigned him, not at birth, but afterwards, and that, too, as indicative

[1] It is curious that some commentators, *e.g.* Grotius, understand "with him" to mean with Lazarus. So Dr. John Ker, in his noble sermon on "Christ's delay to interpose against death," John xi. 32. But there is difficulty in finding any argument in support of this view.

[2] James i. 8.

of character. He is the man of twin natures—two souls; he is thus ill at ease, restless, like him "who goeth two ways,"[1] not as yet, at least, having attained to the peace and joy to be found in "one heart and one way." It may be that this name was assigned him by our Lord Himself. We have, for instance, the similar significant case of Peter.[2]

We now[3] enter upon a new section of the narrative. We are introduced to the incidents at Bethany. There had already been a prolonged season of mourning. Lazarus had died on the very day on which his sisters' message had been sent. He had been buried on the day of his death. Two days had been spent by our Lord and His disciples in Peræa, and a day had been occupied in the journey thence. Lazarus, consequently, "had been in the tomb four days already." There had thus been a long night of sorrow, and no ray of relief as yet appeared to pierce the gloom. But Bethany was at length reached. It lay at a distance of about two miles from Jerusalem. This is emphasised in order to account for the large concourse of sympathising friends from the holy city. The distance easily admitted of their visit. "Many

[1] Ecclus. ii. 12.

[2] Such is the view of Hengstenberg, Wichelhaus, Keil, and others. It seems preferable to that of the unsupported tradition that Thomas had a twin-sister, Lydia, or any other entirely fanciful supposition. Luthardt, in his *Moral des Christenthums*, p. 33, regards John and Thomas as the two outstanding specimens in the apostolic band of the melancholic temperament. If this opinion be correct, we may find in it the reason why it is John only who says anything about Thomas. A sympathy, born of similarity, may account for his giving prominence to Thomas' character "Let us also go, that we may die with Him." Thomas could not forecast the future of this utterance of his. It has become the ground-tone of the well-known hymn by Siegmund von Birken, "Lasset uns mit Jesu ziehen,"—the ground-tone, we may further say, of the whole Christian life.

[3] Ver. 17.

of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to console them concerning their brother." These Jews were friends of the family, but they were no friends of Jesus. They belonged, according to the Evangelist's use of the term, to the hostile faction—the leaders of the opposition. With the sisters, further, there were, at least according to one reading (*πρὸς τὰς περὶ Μάρθαν καὶ Μαρίαν*), a group of women-attendants or relatives. These touches in the narrative point, along with other notices, to the social importance and position of the family, perhaps, also, to some elements in their bereavement of more than common sorrow.

We know how prolonged was the time and how pronounced the symbols of Jewish mourning. In this case, whatever the trappings of woe may have been, so far as the immediate members of the family were concerned, "the house of mourning was dark, because so many angels were spreading their wings over it."[1] But "Jesus was coming;" He was already near. The tidings of His approach had already reached the house, being brought, as we can conceive, by one of the many visitors who were coming and going. Martha, in her position as mistress of the household, and so coming more into contact with others, appeared to be first in hearing the news. She therefore promptly "went and met Him." Mary, on the other hand, "still sat in the house." True to her character, as the third Gospel depicts it, she sought silence, if not repose. Hers was a deeper anguish; for, as ver. 31 shows us, the efforts of the assembled friends were directed chiefly towards comforting her. In prescribed Jewish fashion for mourning and receiving condolence, she

[1] Beecher.

"sat," the centre around which there gathered the general grief. But as a contrast to the incident of Luke x. 39, it is not Mary but Martha who now receives the greater blessing. It is she who first meets her Lord, and gets the promise. It is not unduly pressing the story to hold that, in her case, we may learn this lesson, that in the midst of sorrow active exertion has a blessing in it. There is found in it true medicine for the soul.

And now we reach the interview itself between Jesus and Martha. Her heart—"the breaking heart that will not break"—speaks out in her words, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died!" These are exactly the same words which, later, fell from Mary's lips.[1] Mary, however, in her deeper, tenderer emotion, had, in uttering them, fallen down at His feet. Clearly the sisters had over and over again been together giving utterance to this natural expression of a vain regret. But the words are not in the highest sense praiseworthy. They breathe a certain measure of discontent; they are the expression of a will not entirely subdued to the Divine will. They are "an imperfect piece of devotion, which hath a tincture of faith, but is dyed in passion."[2] But Martha's greeting does not end here. She adds, "And even now I know that whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give Thee." We here learn how imperfect a conception as yet even our Lord's closest friends had of Him as the Messiah. They ranked Him in the main with the prophets of the old dispensation, whose miracles were wrought only in answer to their prayers. These were not their own works, but God's works by them. It was only after the crowning miracle of the

[1] Ver. 32. [2] Donne on Ps. cxli. 3.

Resurrection and Ascension that He came to be recognised in all the significance of the title as the Divine Helper—God manifest in the flesh.[1] Yet the "whatsoever" is none the less a great venture of faith. Unwavering confidence breathes from the word. Her thoughts were beginning to turn to the possibility of a miracle. In His presence the idea was beginning, as it were, to take shape in her mind: What if, after all, He raise my brother to life again! She had, doubtless, heard of Jairus' daughter and of the youth of Nain. She knew that in their cases He had taken back

> "Those keys from death
> Which lock the gates of darkness on mankind."

She had probably also heard the rumour that He had already said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby." Thus, in the half-formed expectation of her heart she made amends for her first murmuring words of regret. At least, she leaves all with holy confidence to His love, and she is rewarded by the announcement, "Thy brother shall rise again." He does not say, as she had suggested, "I shall ask of God that thy brother may rise again." He thus tacitly reproves, or, at all events, corrects, her misapprehension of His person and mission.[2] Her faith was enlarging, and hence the corresponding greatness of the answer granted to it. It was, indeed, much in excess of the petition; and yet in its indefinite form it was designed to be a further

[1] Martha, it is to be noticed, uses the word αἰτεῖν, perhaps from overlooking our Lord's Divine nature. It is a word which He uses of others, but in no instance of Himself.

[2] Schleiermacher wrongly takes our Lord's words as a question—Dost thou indeed think thy brother will rise again? What follows does not in any way require this unnatural exegesis.

trial of her faith. His promise is capable of a double meaning. It might refer to an immediate resurrection, or to the future universal resurrection-day. In this doubleness of meaning lay another test. And how was it met? Her faith, which had miraculously risen as on eagle's wings, once more falls. The strain put on her expectation is too great to bear, and it broke. As if impatiently bursting in upon her Master's words, the cry "broke with such woe as hath no help on earth," "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." She had doubtless heard her Teacher speak of this before; but it was only a commonplace of consolation to her now. She had longed for something more, but now in ebbing faith she sadly yielded herself up to the apathy of a vanished hope. Her present loss finds no solace in the thought of a remote resurrection. Thus of the two explanations of Christ's saying she took the wrong one. The other was too good to be true, and she put it from her. She failed (and this is ever the case in regard to all such failures) because she had been losing sight of the Christ, the Person, who is the true object of faith, and taking refuge instead in dogma. In a sense holding the truth, she was not holding it in innermost connection with Him who is Himself the Truth. Hence we find that He lovingly calls her back to Himself. He causes her thoughts all to centre in Himself. "I am the Resurrection, and the Life: He that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth, and believeth on Me, shall never die. Believest thou this?" This announcement, so startling, so wide, so far-reaching in its import, is the chief key to unlock this sign. It may be proper, therefore, to pass it over, along with Martha's answer, till we come to consider the

significance of the miracle. "When she had said this, she went away, and called Mary, her sister, secretly, saying, The Master is here, and calleth thee." Our Lord thus appears, even when uttering the sublimest and most important mysteries about Himself, to have all the human emotions of His heart going out towards His friends. Leaving what He had just said to work its full effect on Martha's mind, He now, almost abruptly, dismisses her from His presence. He gives her some work to do for Him and others. He commissions her to call her sister, that she too may be comforted. So it ever must be, the "God of all comfort comforteth us in all our affliction, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any affliction, through the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."[1]

> "For we must share, if we would keep,
> That good thing from above:
> Ceasing to give, we cease to have—
> Such is the law of love."

Martha in order to fulfil this law of love turned at once towards her home, "carried thither by the two wings of her own hopes and her Saviour's command."[2] The message she was so eager to give, she gave secretly, prudently avoiding a public announcement; for, like the disciples, she feared danger to her Lord on the part of many hostile Jews; and this fear, we know, was justified by succeeding events.[3] She further felt that her sister, in whose heart there dwelt "an aspiration of eternal prayer," would desire to hear the news apart. "The Master," she said:[4] the Master

[1] 2 Cor. i. 4. [2] Bishop Hall. [3] Ver. 46.

[4] διδάσκαλος only here in this chapter. ἐπιστάτης is found only in Luke, and καθηγητής in Matthew.

specially in the aspect of the Teacher. That was doubtless His familiar title in the home of Bethany —the title loved most of all by her sister, whose most loved place was ever at His feet. Unwilling to be then brought into contact with unreceptive and unfriendly minds, our Lord had stayed His advance, desiring to meet with Mary on the spot where already her sister had stood. Hence with alacrity she arose, finding in the formal condolence of those around her no "mirror in an answering mind," and "went unto Him" whom her soul loved. His outward call was gladly met and responded to by the impulse within her own breast. The Jews, knowing nothing of what had happened, naturally explained her hasty departure from their own ceremonial point of view. They supposed "that she was going unto the tomb to weep there." With sympathetic courtesy, possibly not unmingled with curiosity, as they noticed the sudden change in her demeanour, they "followed her." Thus without invitation, and on their part without design, they became the spectators of this the most striking of all Christ's signs, and witnesses at the same time all the more trustworthy of its reality. The place was soon reached. On seeing her Lord, Mary "fell down at His feet." The fervour of her devotion made her self-forgetful and bold. Having "chosen the better part," she is indifferent to all else. She had often before delighted to be "at His feet" to hear His word. She is now once more at His feet; but it is in the attitude, not of learning, but of adoration—those feet which not many days later she anointed with the costly ointment and wiped with her hair. Her exclamation is identical with that of her sister, excepting a slight characteristic change in the order of the words,

which serves to lay the stress, not so much on death itself, as on the fact that it is a brother who has died. "That brother of mine," she would say; nor does she say aught more. Silence is in reality her fullest speech. But, then, silence at the feet of Jesus is always supplication.

In the presence of the general wailing, our Lord "groaned in the spirit, and was troubled." A mysterious glimpse is here given us into the very depths of His heart. We shall delay the discussion of these words till we consider the significance of the sign. We shall then "turn aside and see this great sight." "Where have ye laid Him?" The inquiry breaks in upon the strange commotion of His Spirit, the storm for the time subsiding to a calm. The question implies no ignorance. It is rather in effect the beckoning of others to follow Him, and He hears them say, "Lord, come and see." As He went He shed tears of silent sorrow. "Jesus wept."[1] A verse this—

> "Whereon is prest
> Full many a sobbing face that drops its best
> And sweetest waters on the record sweet."[2]

These were tears of heart-compassion, premonition, too, of His own later tears of agony in Gethsemane—His "strong crying and tears"—as He went forth to bear the weight of a world's woe. "Behold, how He loved him!" exclaimed the Jewish spectators. Having seen Him before clothed with a certain reserve—a reserve which owed its existence to their own indifference or enmity—they see Him now, with amazement, in the abandonment of sorrow. Thereupon some are beginning to be friendly disposed towards Him.

[1] "Lachrymatus est, non ploravit," Bengel.
[2] Mrs. Browning, *The Two Sayings*.

But here they split partnership. Some others, receiving an entirely opposite impression, exclaim, "Could not this man, which opened the eyes of him that was blind, have caused that this man also should not die?" The healing of the blind man was well known to them. It had but recently taken place, and that, too, in Jerusalem. Hence the allusion so natural and fitting. Was this saying of theirs simply a mocking even amid their tears—a "sarcasmus diabolicus,"[1] as it has been called? Probably it was. It is the unholy attempt to throw suspicion upon Christ's power and love, and in doing so to suggest a dilemma in which they tried to have Him involved. But the effort fails. Its surly suggestions either of weakness or of hypocrisy as belonging to our Lord, are at once to be brushed aside. The tomb is at length reached. It was evidently situated outside of the little town. It was a Jewish custom, if not even a law, that, with the probable exception of kings and prophets, all men were buried beyond the walls. The sepulchre was in all likelihood a natural cave, such as are commonly found in limestone regions, enlarged and adapted to its purpose. It may have stood hard by the wayside, or withdrawn within the precincts of a garden. There is little support of the traditional view that it was the cleft in the rock, reached by twenty-six narrow steps, which is now guarded by a Turkish mosque.[2] A stone or slab lay against the sepulchre or upon it. Our Lord as He stood beside it was surrounded by the inner circle of Martha and Mary and the disciples, and also by the larger outer circle of the Jewish mourners and the people; and

[1] Piscator.

[2] On the tomb and its site, *vid.* Ritter's *Comparative Geography of Palestine*, iv. 213 ff.

now there comes from His lips the strange authoritative call—a call full of mystery and yet full of meaning—a call to disturb the silent repose of the dead, and thus disturbing the minds and hearts of the living, "Take ye away the stone." While the issue is awaited with eager suspense, Martha, with the intensely human interest which clings to her character, interposes. She is "the sister of him that was dead"; she is therefore entitled to speak, and she speaks words of shuddering remonstrance. She pleads on behalf of decency as well as the sanctities of sorrow. In her ebbing faith she will suffer no exposure of the humiliation of death, "Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days." Though many commentators think otherwise, there is ground for supposing that the body had not been embalmed—that is to say, not, according to Jewish custom, wrapped up in costly spices to ward off the first touch of time's corrupting fingers. This neglect was owing to no lack of sisterly affection or of means. The neglect or delay is probably rather to be traced to some dim half-formed yet clinging expectation in the sisters' minds of that which was to happen—an expectation awakened and sustained by their Lord's own words. If this view be justified, it fits marvellously into the incident of the next chapter. The very precious "pound of ointment of spikenard," purchased, as we may suppose, at the time of Lazarus' death, but not then used, and now useless in regard to him, Mary takes in the fulness of her heart and therewith "anoints the feet of Jesus." That Friend, who had restored a brother to her love, she now in the presence of that brother thus honours. How can she more worthily expend the treasure than on Him, the hour of whose own death, she felt, was being hastened

by the restoration of her brother's life! Our Lord Himself declared that she had done so "against the day of His own burying." Here, then, we seem to have one of those most striking undesigned coincidences, such as every loving student of Scripture delights to notice and to prize.

But, returning to Martha's remonstrance, we may conceive that it rested on "the common Jewish idea that corruption commenced on the fourth day; that the drop of gall, which had fallen from the sword of the angel and caused death, was then working its effect, and that, as the face changed, the soul took its final leave from the resting-place of the body."[1] Be this as it may, the answer arrested all further interference: "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou believedst, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" Reproof and encouragement alike are conveyed in the words. Martha's thoughts are at once turned away by them from the breath of corruption to the glory of the Almighty. But, further, her recollection is thrown back upon some express assurance which has been already given her—"Said I not unto thee?" We ask, when, how? There is indeed no such precise promise to be found in the earlier verses of the chapter, but ver. 4 is the nearest approach to it; and there are others which contain the promise by implication. She is sent back to these that her faith may not fail. This glory of God is a vision vouchsafed only to faith—a vision beyond the miracle itself—even the heart-recognition of Christ Jesus Himself, the Eternal Word, "in whom was life, and the life was the light of men." The look of faith sees that vision still. Once more, if it be faith alone which can see gleaming through the veil of the sign the glory

[1] Edersheim, ii. 324.

beyond, what does this faith itself rest upon? The answer is clear. It rests upon the Saviour's own word, "Said I not unto thee?" No further testimony is to be sought than that which He Himself has given regarding His Father and Himself and His work. Those who reject this testimony are blind. Those who accept it, having their eyes "purged with euphrasy and rue," alone see.[1]

Martha in humble acquiescence accepted the implied rebuke and encouragement. Men with ready hands, though with wondering hearts, "took away the stone." This was the part in the transaction which could be done by them, and therefore it was given them to do. We have the exact parallel in the first sign. It was the servants who at our Lord's command "filled the waterpots with water up to the brim." Now it is He who is "the brightness of the Father's glory" who is Himself about to work. And His work is prefaced by prayer. His attitude is recorded—"Jesus lifted up His eyes." There is meaning in the very posture. He turned away His gaze from the charnel-house, from the company of confused and sobbing mourners, — from earth itself to heaven,—to the true home of His Spirit, and to Him who is His Father in heaven and our Father in Him. So it was also, in the desert place, in the midst of the famishing multitude, waiting to receive the loaves from His disciples' hands, it is said that, "looking up to heaven, He blessed them, and brake."[2] But while this is the natural outward indication of the uplifted heart, it suggests a striking contrast

[1] Schleiermacher and Steinmeyer have both expanded this into noble sermons. The latter especially; *vid. Festreden*, p. 51. Rothe also has a discourse on the same theme. *Nachgelassene Predigten*, ii. 155.

[2] Luke ix. 16.

in the present case. The spectators, with the look of despondency, and perhaps of curiosity, were gazing into the cave, and possibly seeing Lazarus' body itself now made visible by the struggling light which the removal of the stone admitted. But our Lord's uplifted eyes drew them away from thoughts of death to thoughts of life and immortality. He is the true Man, the ideal ἄνθρωπος, ever turning the face upward. With all others there must be the self-abased and downcast spirit, finding expression in Ezra's words, "O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to Thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens,"[1] before there can be the upturned look of childlike confidence in God.

In form this, our Lord's prayer, is simply thanksgiving—that alone, though the element of petition is implied. "I thank Thee that Thou heardest Me." This assuredly involves the idea of petition. But, in reality, with Him petition and thanksgiving were essentially one. What He asked was already granted. Hence, in seeking He acknowledged receiving. In a lower sense, in regard to all spiritual blessings which are sought, this holds good also of His people. The more assured the believer is that in his speaking he is heard, the more readily will the Amen of his prayer pass into the Hallelujah of his thanks. There is a sense in which to him longing is itself fruition.[2] Our Lord's miracle, we notice here, was done in faith, but it was faith in Himself as the Son of God—faith in His own oneness

[1] Ezra ix. 6.

[2] "Per *preces* flumina bonorum ex fonte inexhausto omnis bonitatis hauriuntur, per *gratiarum actionem* ad illum tanquam oceanum redeunt," Lampe.

with the Father—a faith therefore which, in a very real sense, while it looked up to God, rested, in this respect, also on Himself. We have, in addition to the thanksgiving, what might be called a declaration explanatory of it. "And I knew that Thou hearest Me always." In no case were His supplications ineffectual; nor could they be, for He could say, "I and My Father are one." This part of the utterance, a part which Strauss capriciously regards as interpolated and as of much later date, may have been intended by our Lord as a gentle, indirect corrective of Martha's own recently spoken words, "I know that whatsoever Thou shalt ask of God, God will give Thee." "Ask," she had said (*αἰτήσῃ*). By the use of that somewhat mean word she had, all unconsciously, been dishonouring Christ's relation to God the Father. While no notice of this was taken at the time, it is reproved and corrected now. It is no strange thing, it is what He knew, it is matter of course, His being thus heard and answered. It could not be otherwise. Even His enemies bore witness: "We know," they said, "that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and do His will, him He heareth."[1] Our Lord declares, therefore, "I knew." This knowledge was His in His essential oneness with the Father, in the testimony of His own sinless conscience, in His ceaseless experience, and in His having the Spirit resting without measure upon Him.[2]

But why did our Lord pray thus formally at all? He prayed, not because He needed aid, but rather because others needed instruction. He declared, "Because of the multitude which standeth around I said it, that they may believe that Thou didst send

[1] Chap. ix. 31. [2] So Lampe, *in loc.*

Me." This explanation of His communion with the Father, the clothing of it in words which the sisters, the disciples, the whole company might hear, had for its purpose to guard them against all misapprehension—to show that God and He were at one in what He was about to do. Nor does this view tend to make His prayer in any sense unreal. It was a real act of the Son's faithfulness and love. It was His delight to declare His unbroken fellowship with the Father—"The Father worketh hitherto, and I work." It was needful that He should now expressly do so in order that men might acknowledge Him as the Sent of God. Especially, we may say, was it so here. His foes otherwise would have traced the sign about to be wrought to necromancy. They would have traced it all to the present powers of darkness or to the equally Satanic power of some clever deceit. In this way would He emphatically and with peculiar significance assert Himself as "sent"—even "God's righteous Servant."

Thus having spoken a word in season to all the varied moods of the beholders, He appears at last before us in the majesty of His power. "He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth." "The weary man and full of woe" is at the same time "the Resurrection and the Life." He had already cried to the Ever-living God: now He cries to the lifeless, tenantless clay, "the worn-out fetter which the soul has broken and thrown away," nay, rather, to the absent soul itself. The word is a very strong one, He cried "with a loud voice." It is "God in the voice and glory of a man." He had just been weeping; why then was it not rather the still, small voice, sympathetic with sorrow, which men now heard? Once it might

have been so; but here was no case of "wizards that peep and mutter." It was no voice of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, "a speech whispering out of the dust." He will give no room for such a suggestion to His enemies. He was standing face to face with death, and as the vanquisher of death He cried with the loud voice of sovereign authority—a voice which to hear was to obey. His were the keys of death and of Hades. The cry is the prelude to that hour "in the which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of judgment." "Lazarus, come forth:" even here we see that He "calleth His sheep by name, and leadeth them out;" so evermore it is. Living upon earth, or living beyond the portals of the tomb, His people are all alike known to Him. His eye is upon them; His love is encompassing them; His voice will yet reach them. By name, not one of them forgotten, they shall live at His call.

"He that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and his face was bound up with a napkin." As if aroused at midnight he awoke. His awakening was both immediate and complete. He is arrayed in the cerements of the grave,[1] and bandages are upon the eyes "where life holds garrison"; but his restored life has the bloom of beauty and strength upon it. It is put in legendary form thus: "It was with the bloom and fragrance of a bridegroom

[1] κειρίαι, which was used properly of the cord of a bedstead, *e.g.* Arist. *Aves.* 816, came later to be used of bedclothes. LXX. Prov. vii. 16. Hence here it is used of the swathings of a corpse. *Vid.* Hatch, *Essays in Biblical Greek*, p. 5.

that he came forth." We may at least conceive that the paleness of death rested on the awe-struck countenances of the beholders rather than on his.

And now the final command, "Loose him, and let him go." Whither? What to do? Assuredly not to testify to eager listeners the secrets of that world from which he had been summoned. Whatever "hoarded memories of the heart" were his, if indeed there were any such, they were not for earthly converse and use.[1] He had no glimpse to reveal of the future world, which would throw light upon the duties of the present.

> "Behold a man raised up by Christ.
> The rest remaineth unrevealed:
> He told it not; or something sealed
> The lips of that Evangelist."[2]

Or we may turn to the marvellous portraiture of the character and demeanour of the risen Lazarus, which Browning gives,[3] largely gathered up as it is in the one line—

> "This grown man eyes the world now like a child."

Or we may take the latest attempt to portray that which in reality eludes all conception and description. Sir Edwin Arnold[4] makes Mary say to her questioner regarding her brother—

> "Yet 'tis not well he should be marked! He walks
> A wordless, gentle, wistful man, aware
> Of more than may be said in any speech;
> Not of our world, though in it, well-content

---

[1] "Das Licht jener Welt ist unserm Sonnen- und Mondlicht unvergleichbar; dazwischen hängt Vorhang," Herder.

[2] Tennyson, *In Mem.* xxxi.

[3] *An Epistle, containing the Strange Medical Experience of Karshish, the Arab Physician.*

[4] *The Light of the World.*

To wait Heaven's ways in all things. Time will be
The truth shall widely spread; now it is best
We seal our lips, and watch him silently
Coming and going, manifesting God."

One word as to tradition. This Lazarus, this *Revenant* of Bethany, is said to have lived for thirty years after his restoration to earth, and to have died a second time at the age of sixty. He and his sisters are spoken of, last of all, not as of Bethany, but as of Marseilles. He is held to have been the first bishop of the Church in that city, suffering ultimately martyrdom within its walls. These traditions all unmistakably bear the impress of a late and thoroughly untrustworthy age. They have neither interest nor value.

Where the Evangelist breaks off the narrative, there we must leave it. There is no guide by whose aid we can resume it.

It is enough that many of the Jews who were along with the sisters "believed on Him." With them the sign brought them into saving contact with Him who wrought it. They not only believed that the miracle was real, but they also accepted Christ's own testimony that God had sent Him. In believing they saw, as our Lord had promised to Martha, "the glory of God." But it was far otherwise with "some of them." They "went away to the Pharisees, and told them the things which Jesus had done." "They were not persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Apparently not even returning to the house at Bethany, they repaired, and that at once, to the authorities to denounce the wonder-worker, and set in motion the long cherished plots against Him. So it ever is. The glory of God by its very brightness only serves to blind the hardened.[1]

[1] Quo evidentius Dei gloria splendet, eo magis impios claritate ejus excæcari: quod Judæorum et aliorum hominum exempla loquuntur

Bengel has well said: "Death itself more readily yielded to the power of Christ, than did man's unbelief."

In closing this exposition of this last and most marvellous of all our Lord's signs wrought during His earthly ministry and recorded in this or any other Gospel, it is interesting to note that it was a custom with many of the wealthier Christians in the ancient Byzantine Church to wear, woven on their garments, the pictorial representation of this miracle. The practice was regarded as a token of their sanctity. Be it ours rather to bear the record of it and its lesson on our hearts. Thus will Christ Jesus be to us "the Resurrection and the Life." [1]

II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SIGN.

We must seek this significance in our Lord's declaration, and also in His demeanour. The first of these we find in vers. 25, 26; the second, in ver. 33 and ver. 38. What then of the declaration, "I am the Resurrection, and the Life: he that believeth on Me, though he

quibus ipsa lux tenebræ, et ipsum verbum vitæ odor mortis ad mortem fuit, ac impletur in illis, quod Oseæ xiv. 9, habetur: viæ Domini rectæ, et justi ambulabunt in eis, prævaricatores autem corruent in eis," Hunnius. "Nullum est Dei opus quod non impietas veneni sui amaritudine inficiat et corrumpat," Piscator.

[1] The raising of Lazarus has been, throughout the entire history of the Church, a favourite subject for Christian art. *Vid.* the interesting notice of its representation in painting, sculpture, and on glasses in the Catacombs, in Northcote and Brownlow's *Roma Sotterranea*, vol. ii. It has also been a frequently selected theme of poetry, *e.g.* Prudentius, *Diptychon* xxxviii. Juvencus (fourth century) in his *Historia Evangelica*, Book IV. Köttgen's drama, *Lazarus von Bethanien.* Tennyson, *In Memoriam* xxxi., xxxii.; and Browning's, *An Epistle*, alluded to above. Especially, as in Browning's poem, is Lazarus frequently portrayed as a *Revenant*, like Er the Pamphylian in Plato's *Republic*, Book x.

die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth, and believeth on Me, shall never die?" Here was consolation offered to Martha, far different from that which lay in the vague thought of some remote futurity—a far distant resurrection-morn. It had its immediate reference, indeed, to the raising of her brother, but it was at the same time bursting, as it were, with its rich fulness of meaning. "In these words are gathered up in our Lord's own person all the mysteries of time and eternity—of life and of death—of the present and the future. He declares himself to be the Central Life—the Being in whom life existed and exists as an unoriginated and indestructible attribute—an underived and inalienable prerogative—as He, therefore, who was, and is, and is to come, and is alive for evermore; to whom there is no past and no future, but one infinite and unmeasured present, an everlasting now.[1]" "I," I Myself, and no other, not merely promise or give, but "am the Life." And because He is the Life, He confers life and conquers death. The resurrection of the body is but an act, if it may be so called, in this eternal existence of Him who is Life. This announcement from our Lord's lips,

[1] Stanley Leathes, *The Witness of St. John to Christ*, p. 244. *Vid.* especially Dr. Weiss, *Der Johanneische Lehrbegriff*, p. 29, and also Schleiermacher's lecture on this passage. Lightfoot has a curious note in his Hebrew and Talmudical Exercitations upon St. John, *in loc.*, regarding Jewish ideas about the principle or seed of the resurrection of the body. "Be it so, O Jew (if you will, or it can be), that the little bone *Luz*, in the backbone, is the seed and principle of your resurrection; as to us, our blessed Jesus, who hath raised Himself from the dead, is the spring and principle of ours. 'Hadrian asked R. Joshuah Ben Hananiah, "How doth a man revive again in the world to come?" He answered and said, "From Luz in the backbone." Saith he to him, "Demonstrate this to me." Then he took Luz, a little bone out of the backbone, and put it in water, and it was not steeped; he put it into the fire, and it was not burned; he brought in to the mill, and that could not grind it; he laid it on the anvil, and knocked it with a hammer, but the anvil was cleft and the hammer broken,'" etc.

like others in this chapter, is enigmatical to this extent, that it has a doubleness of allusion in it. Life of soul as well as of body is described. Indeed, like all the sayings of Him who is the Truth as well as the Life, it is like the well-cut precious stone, ever darting its rays on many sides. It throws its light even on the realm of nature, the material world around us. He is therein the Resurrection and the Life. In every leaf that falls in the autumn wind, and in every swelling bud of spring—in the season's course—in the ceaseless life in death which pervades all inanimate creation, we recognise the presence of Him who is the Eternal Word who "was in the beginning with God," and of whom it is said "all things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that hath been made."

Once more in the region of thought, it is His "Life that is the life of men." Without Him there is no such life. Without Him as the revealed Life there is, in the highest sense, no true intellectual life. A great historian of Greece has bequeathed to us a terrible delineation of the plague that once devastated Athens in the time of her brightest grandeur. Everywhere there lay men and women and children under the shelter of the marble-pillared halls, and in the very shadow of the statues of their gods,—in the midst of all that highest art and civilisation could do for humanity,—there they lay in the unrelieved agonies of dissolution. What availed the splendour and culture of that vaunted heathen life? It brought no solace, it proffered no help, it awakened no hope; no light was shed upon that other world—

> "Whereof Life is the curtain, and mute Death
> Herald and doorkeeper.

Such is a picture, a representation of what the intel-

lectual life of men, even under the most favourable conditions, is and must be without Christ. It is He, the essential Life, who once recalled His friend Lazarus from the tomb, who calls men's spirits everywhere into life, quickening every region of human thought. In this respect He announces Himself to the world as the Resurrection and the Life. But it is by no means chiefly into such by-paths of thought as these that we are now invited to wander. Our Lord rather declares Himself to be the source and giver of all soul-resurrection from spiritual death to eternal life, embracing, too, not merely that which lay nearest Martha's heart, her brother's rising again, but also the general bodily resurrection at the last day, that so in the reunion of soul and body, the eternal life, begun on earth, may be perfected in heaven. That it is mainly in this sense that we are to understand our Lord's declaration is evident from His own commentary upon it. He expands the meaning thus: "He that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on Me"—that is, "he that in that faith hath seized the true conception of life"[1]—"shall never die."[2] All His people, without distinction and exception, live, though they be dead as to the body. Being one with Christ, further, they can never die. They are "risen together with Christ." Hence they can individually say, "I live; yet not I, but Christ that liveth in me."

But it is faith that is emphasized as that which

[1] Westcott.

[2] In the words "live" and "die," as understood of natural life and death, there is an obvious and intentional paradox. "The believer in Me, if you suppose him to die, shall live; while the living believer shall never die;" or, "Belief in Me shall insure life after death, and insure life against death." Webster and Williamson.

makes Christ Jesus the Resurrection and the Life to His people. Those who have this faith have entered into inner personal communion with Him, and so have overthrown within them all power of spiritual and eternal death. He even gives them this assurance, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Reverting to His own teaching in chap. vi. 33, 34, we may put it thus:— Our spiritual partaking of Him as the Bread of Life by faith, makes Him the Resurrection and the Life to us. As Augustine has it: "From whence is the death of the soul? Because faith is not. Whence death in the body? Because the soul is not there. Therefore the soul of my soul is faith." It is in accordance with this paramount importance belonging to faith that our Lord now turns to Martha, the reed shaken by the wind, and asks her about her own personal attitude to this general truth—"Believest thou this?" He would thus draw from her a clear, full confession of her faith. As on many other parallel occasions in the Gospel history, her confession, while spontaneous, is given in response to His own direct inquiry. Though her understanding could not do it, yet her childlike heart embraced it all—"Yea, Lord; I have believed[1] that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, even He that cometh into the world." "With the heart she believed unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession was made unto salvation." "The Christ," not merely a teacher sent from God, as Nicodemus said,—not merely a prophet, as the woman of Samaria and others said; Martha's acknowledgment goes beyond these confessions. She exclaimed, "Thou art the Christ," the anointed King of Israel, the Messiah, the long-promised and expected Deliverer of the people, even "the Son of

[1] "Ego hanc fidem suscepi," Bengel. I maintain and hold to the belief.

God." Her spiritual insight reached through Old Testament prophecy, and through her own personal experience of her Master's friendship, up to a right conception of His person and mission. With something of assured confidence she declared Him to be the "Lord from heaven," even "He that cometh into the world." The designation is a pregnant one. He is the Coming One. In many manifestations of Himself had He already come to the chosen people as the Angel of the Covenant. He has come once for all as "God manifest in the flesh." He is ever coming in the progress of His Church—in each sinner's conversion. He has come, and ceaselessly is coming, as "the Resurrection and the Life," and He is yet to come as Judge. "Behold the Judge standeth at the doors." Thus in this confession of faith from Martha's lips, turning back as it does upon our Lord's own declaration about Himself, and illustrated and confirmed by the sign which was about to be wrought in connection with it, we hear a voice above all the din and turmoil and discordant sounds of earth,—the voice of Him who is "the Prince of Life," inviting men to Himself, that in Him they may not see death. He says even now to every one who has the hearing ear, "Believest thou this?"[1]

Above all, in determining the significance of this

[1] πιστεύων εἰς ἐμέ. This construction of the verb with εἰς is peculiarly frequent in the writings of John. Indeed, he uses no other preposition; and while he uses the dative when faith on a testimony or a person is alluded to, he always uses εἰς when he is describing saving faith on Christ. Sometimes we find εἰς τὸ ὄνομα, etc. The only exception to this usage in John's writings is in John iii. 23; but see Dusterdieck thereon, *in loc.* On the various constructions of πιστευεῖν with prepositions, *vid.* Ellicott on 1 Tim. i. 16, πιστεύεις τοῦτο; compare 1 John iv. 16 and 1 Cor. xiii. 7. The accusative in these cases is at once understood. It marks the object of faith—that which is believed.

miracle we must address ourselves to the discussion of what is involved in our Lord's demeanour as well as in His declaration, as depicted in the words, "Groaned in the spirit, and was troubled." This is the second part of our inquiry.

In perusing this whole chapter, we have been brought step by step to that part of it in which the psychological interest chiefly centres. The secret thoughts of the disciples—of the sisters—of the Jews—are gradually disclosed to us, as we read how they were severally affected by the death of Lazarus. And now, in the 33rd verse, we have a passing view of the very heart of our Lord Himself,—we have partially revealed to us the mysterious depths of the soul of Him who, while wearing our full humanity, is yet one with the everlasting Father—the only-begotten Son of God. Here, then, in this verse, more even than in the words which describe the miracle itself, we are right in seeking the very heart of the narrative, and its doctrinal significance.

At the threshold of our inquiry we meet a difficulty in the word "groaned" (ἐνεβριμήσατο). That it represents a deep and strong emotion, having its seat in our Lord's spirit, and its manifestation in His whole bearing, admits of no doubt whatever; but it has been much disputed whether the emotion be that of sorrow or of anger, or a mingling of both. If, however, we regard the word in itself, and trace its usage, the conclusion seems inevitable that, apart from the undue pressure of exegetical considerations, we must accept for it no other meaning than that of anger, visibly expressed indignation.[1] Let us look at the other passages in the

[1] What in LXX. Lam. ii. 6 is called ἐμβριμήμα ὀργῆς αὐτοῦ. Gumlich ("Die Räthsel der Erweckung Lazari," in *Studien und Kritiken*, 1862,

New Testament where the word is found. These are only three in number. (*a*) Matt. ix. 30. The meaning here evidently is, He sternly charged them, the charge implying something of angry rebuke and threatening. As Luther's version has it, "Er bedrohte sie." (*b*) Mark i. 43. Here the Evangelist's meaning is clearly represented by an early rendering, "graviter interminatus cum indignatione expulit." (*c*) Mark xiv. 5. In this passage the expression does not, as in the other cases, refer to our Lord Himself, but to those who were with Him. It has its commentary in the corresponding accounts of the other Gospels, and, as thus explained, it can bear no other meaning than this, that they murmured in the excitement of anger. In accordance, therefore, with the analogy of Scripture, our Lord's groaning, in the passage under consideration, must be explained by His anger—the anger which accompanies reproof and threatening. His groaning was the visible expression of His wrath.[1]

Such is the view taken with almost unanimous consent by the ancient Greek expositors. It also has the support of the ablest modern criticism, especially that of the Lutheran school.

Holding fast this explanation of the word, we get rid at once of several current interpretations of our passage as simply philologically untenable. Without classifying these and assigning them to their several authors, we may set them aside with a mere general notice. It was not, we conclude, the groaning of grief, —either sympathy in the presence of so much sorrow

pp. 260–267) has investigated very thoroughly the word in its philological aspects, in its cognate forms, and in its usages, both in classical literature and in the Septuagint, and has placed, as we think, this conclusion beyond reasonable doubt.

[1] It was, as Lampe well puts it, "indignatio" and "detestatio" in one.

on the one hand, or sadness in the presence of so much unbelief on the other. Such sighs of tenderest feeling on our Lord's part, it is true, were not awanting. We cannot doubt even the real anguish of His soul—the pressure of present grief which weighed upon Him, as He saw the bitter tears of sisterly and friendly love,—the tokens of a sorrow which refused to be comforted, —and as He also recognised the unbelief and hypocrisy which lurked in the hearts of many of the Jewish comforters. But this grief, felt by our Lord, is in no way described by the word "groaned." It is rather portrayed afterwards in other and simpler terms—"Jesus wept." Still further, as we are not justified in seeking in the word, as used here, any modification of its proper meaning, viz. the emotion of anger, so we are not entitled to combine any other meaning with it. For instance, De Wette holds it to be the expression of a grief that closely borders upon displeasure;—Kling, a mingling of true human sympathy and holy indignation, especially the latter, in view of the unfriendly, hostile bearing of the Jews;—Lange, a strange blending of sympathy, sorrow, anger, and even joy;—Lücke, the deepest emotion of sympathetic pain,—adding, in order, if possible, to retain some slight tinge of the true uniform meaning of the word, that there is of necessity an element of displeasure, of anger, in all sorrow.[1] Our Lord's groaning in spirit would thus be His gathering up all the deepest feelings of His love and sympathy,—His "strong crying and tears" as He went forward to His work of power. All these views,

[1] Ewald, in his *Geschichte Christus und seiner Zeit* (p. 486, note), regards the word as synonymous with στενάζειν or ἀναστενάζειν, though perhaps somewhat stronger, as these are used in similar circumstances in Mark vii. 34 and viii. 12.

more or less differing from one another, are to be set aside. They owe their common origin to the supposed necessity of the context. They would never have arisen otherwise, and they all alike do violence to the meaning of the word. That word must be understood here to predicate, of the Son of man, the one and simple feeling of displeasure—wrath.

But there is a further trait in the Evangelist's description of our Lord's emotion—"in the spirit."[1] We have exact parallels in Mark viii. 12, "He sighed deeply in His spirit;" Luke x. 21, "Jesus rejoiced in spirit;" John xiii. 21, "He was troubled in spirit;" Acts xvii. 16, of Paul, "His spirit was stirred within him;" Acts xiii. 5, "Paul was pressed in spirit;" and Luke i. 47, though with a different construction, "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." All these passages clearly show us how we are to render and understand the words here. The dative undoubtedly indicates the sphere in which what is predicated in the verb took place. "He groaned in the spirit," *i.e.* in His own spirit. His emotion was no superficial one. It was in His inmost spirit.[2]

[1] The dative certainly does not imply either that it was His own spirit which the Saviour, in holy anger with Himself, sought to control, or that it was under the influence, or by the guidance, of the Holy Spirit He was thus vehemently moved. The corresponding expression in ver. 38, where the same violent agitation is again mentioned, but with the addition "in Himself," renders both these expositions in the highest degree improbable.

[2] It was "pectore ab imo;" it was in His πνεῦμα, "der Boden alles ethisch tiefen Empfindens" (Delitzsch, *Bib. Psych.* p. 186); "In der Tiefe seines sittlich selbstbewussten Empfindens" (Meyer).

We might err were we here to lay much stress upon the recognised distinction between πνεῦμα and ψυχή. The fourth Gospel, there is reason to believe, is a refutation, in one of its aims at least, of that Cerinthian Gnosis which taught an unscriptural separation of the Æon Christ from Jesus,—the Divine Logos from the man Christ Jesus. It therefore depicts throughout our Lord in the unbroken oneness of His personality—in the

But there is another clause still which claims consideration, viz.—"and was troubled." While the words "in the spirit," or, as in ver. 38, "in Himself," portray an inner agitation, they do not necessarily imply that there was no outward manifestation accompanying it. Both Lücke and Luthardt hold they do, the latter appearing strangely to assert that whenever anger assumes an outward expression, it has obviously escaped beyond personal control, and so far partakes of imperfection and sin. These commentators understand even the expression, "And was troubled," of a purely inner feeling. Lücke, indeed, sees in the clause simply a more general statement of what has been already said, and supposes that τῷ σώματι, that is, in His bodily frame, or some similar addition, would be necessary if a visible manifestation were to be described. But surely τῷ σώματι would imply a limitation which the purposely more general ἑαυτόν repudiates. "Himself" may be understood of body, soul, and spirit alike—the whole nature. It is quite true that, in so far as it refers to human agents, the word "troubled" is used in the New Testament invari-

mutual interpenetration of the divine and human in Him, as far as His personal moral consciousness is concerned. Hence the Evangelist seems almost to use πνεῦμα and ψυχή, as referring to the Saviour, interchangeably. We find, *e.g.*, ψυχή in xii. 27 (comp. Matt. xxvi. 38; Mark xiv. 34), "Now is My soul troubled." Yet it is decidedly too much to say with Meyer that ψυχή might have been used in our passage, only that πνεῦμα is more characteristic. Here rather it is the πνεῦμα, the "vis superior, agens, imperans in homine,"—the spirit of the Divine Son of man, in the glory of His power, troubled with a holy anger in the presence of death and Him who has the power of it. In xii. 27, on the other hand, it is the ψυχή, the "vis inferior quæ agitur, movetur, in imperio tenetur,"—the seat of natural human sensibility, the soul of the Man of sorrows, in the weakness of His humiliation, troubled in the near approach of His passion. On πνεῦμα and ψυχή in their relation to each other and to the Logos, *vid.* Weiss, *Der Johanneische Lehrbegriff*, p. 256.

ably of mental emotions, of whatever kind these may be, though more readily of sorrow than of anger,[1] and does not therefore of itself suggest the idea of bodily tremor, or aught of physical excitement whatever. But here the word receives its colouring, as it were, from the preceding clause, and at the same time is explanatory of it. It seems, therefore, probable that in the troubling there does lie an allusion to the visible expression of the emotion. At all events, it lies in the very nature of things that every strong emotion within must work outwards to visible form,—assuming some corresponding movement or aspect of the body. And, indeed, as Hengstenberg observes in this case, our Lord's agitation of spirit could not otherwise have become matter of historical record at all. We can hardly doubt that the bodily frame of Jesus yielded itself readily and naturally to reveal the motions of His spirit.[2] His must have been a countenance on which those whose sympathetic hearts fitted them to see, could trace much of the thoughts and feelings within. This conviction has all along directed and sustained the noblest, though unfulfilled, and indeed impossible, aim of highest art, to imagine and depict the ideal lineaments of that face divine. His countenance, therefore, in this the indignation of His spirit, appears to have been troubled. His whole frame, perhaps, was moved. He shuddered. A storm of wrath was seen to sweep over Him. The entire passage points to this conclusion. In adopting it, however, we recoil from the suggestion of Renan, that

[1] Our own "vex" is a good instance of a word bearing both these significations. "To be vexed" means, in some parts of England, to be disquieted with anger; and in Scotland, usually, to be disquieted with grief. A similar usage may be seen in the Hebrew זָעַף.

[2] *Vid.* Ullmann's *Sündlosigkeit Jesu*, p. 212.

our Lord was only seeking in this way to satisfy the requirements of popular Jewish opinion, by representing the energy of the divine virtue as an epileptic and convulsive principle. That view is quite in accordance with Renan's unworthy treatment of the miracle as a whole.

The disciples,[1] Mary, the Jews who were comforting her, were witnesses of this strange, unwonted sight. And, doubtless, as they gazed, they themselves were troubled. They saw in our Lord's whole bearing a mystery which they could not comprehend. Something of this trouble lays hold also upon us. For does not this anger disturb the ideal of the Saviour enshrined in the hearts of His people? He, the patient, submissive, loving friend appearing, while all others are in tears, vehemently moved by anger! Does not such a perturbation of spirit, more especially in such circumstances, border on sin, if indeed it do not essentially partake of it? But in this respect we must not measure Him by ourselves. His anger was no passion. It was not a suffering under an impulse, as of some foreign power, asserting the mastery over Him. We, indeed, when we are controlled by anger, are in constant and sure danger of failing to control ourselves; the will abdicates its post as guide, because it becomes itself enslaved. We are lowered thus in our own estimation and in that of others, for "he that ruleth

[1] We say here "the disciples"; for the theory advocated by Stanley Leathes (*The Witness of St. John to Christ*, p. 279), that John was the only one of the disciples who witnessed this miracle, our Lord having left the others at Ephraim, has nothing to recommend it, and is by no means a satisfactory explanation of the omission of this miracle in the synoptical Gospels. The 16th verse certainly leads us, in the absence of any hint to the contrary, to suppose that not only the ἐκλεκτοὶ τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν,—*i.e.* Peter and James and John,—but the disciples, as a whole, were witnesses of this work of power.

himself" is alone noble. So far, then, as there is in anger the loss of self-command, there is assuredly the element of sin. But in regard to our Lord the Horatian adage which speaks of anger as a temporary madness, or the verse of Gregory Nazianzen,[1]

"Irascor iræ, dæmoni intus condito,"

is meaningless. We are therefore guarded by the very form of the sentence against the danger of investing *His* wrath with aught of an unworthy character. It is declared to be free from all taint of human infirmity. He troubled *Himself*, not "He was troubled." We may adduce as an Old Testament parallel Isa. xlii. 13, "The Lord shall go forth as a *mighty* man, He shall *stir up* jealousy like a man of war;" and a better parallel still, as far as the form of the expression is concerned, is found in Phil. ii. 8, "He humbled *Himself*." Just as there the voluntariness of His humiliation is clearly indicated, so here the voluntariness of His agitation of spirit. It was an act of His own free-will; not a passion hurrying Him on, but a voluntarily-assumed state of feeling which remained under His direction and control. He held the reins of it, saying, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther." In a word, there was no element of disorder (ἀταξία) in it. As Cornelius a Lapide puts it, His were not passions, but "propassiones libere assumptæ." It does not seem unreasonable to find a meaning of this kind in the somewhat uncommon use of the active verb with the reflexive pronoun. Meyer, indeed, denies this, holding this construction to be without any dogmatic significance at all, and to be merely more dramatic. Hengstenberg, too, says: "Any reference to

[1] Carmen de Ira.

the divine nature of Christ, and His elevation above all mere passivity of physical emotions, as resting upon that divine nature, is not to be sought in the troubling of Himself. The same would be said of a human hero, who roused himself to a sharp contest. If we explain the use of the active verb by reference to the divine nature of Christ, there is no reason why the same active verb was not used in xii. 27, xiii. 21." This is all true, so far; but it must not be overlooked that in these latter passages the troubling of our Lord's soul and spirit is in the near prospect of His betrayal and passion, and is the troubling of sorrow,—grief in the apprehension of suffering. Here, on the other hand, the peculiarity to be noticed is that it is the troubling of anger — that emotion, be it remembered, which is much more likely to be allied with imperfection and sin than the emotion of grief. Hence the reflexive form of the expression has a beauty and propriety of its own here, and it serves to warn us against misapprehension. The danger of adopting any dishonouring view of our Lord's person and character from the "groaning" is carefully guarded against, not only by the addition of "in the spirit," but specially by this further clause—"He troubled Himself." He was not troubled, but He troubled Himself; and thus in this, as in all else, He stands before us as unapproachably and divinely perfect. While the wrath of man does *not* aim at the carrying out of God's righteous purposes, but rather seeks to frustrate them, —while it fails to produce that fruit of righteousness which comes from God, and is pleasing in His sight (Jas. i. 20),—the wrath of Him who is true and full, because sinless man *does* "work the righteousness of God."[1]

[1] Our passage is well expounded by Nifanius thus: "Non turbabatur aut percellebatur ab iracundia, sed turbavit se ipsum. Licet enim omnes

Our Lord then, though appearing in the incident under our consideration to be subject to the law of human emotion,[1] is yet to be regarded as free from the imperfection which, if not essentially, yet actually, subjection to that law implies in us. His was the nobility of anger, being fully and ceaselessly subject to a will which knew only the Divine will as its one rule and guide.

We have thus far tried to analyse the Evangelist's words, and we have gathered up these results:—Our Lord's groaning was that of indignation—an outburst of fiery wrath. This anger arose in His spirit. It manifested itself in His bearing—perhaps in the violent trembling of His whole bodily frame. Yet it was free from all taint of imperfection, and was retained completely in His own power and control.

But before proceeding to another and more interesting part of the discussion, we may observe that there lies in this 33rd verse a very strong, because entirely incidental argument for the authenticity and

humanos affectus suscepisset in naturæ assumptæ veritate, sine tamen peccato aut vitio, seu defectu omnes: quare non rapitur affectibus aut extra se fertur, sed pro re nata intra se volens, eosdem extra se ostendit. In nobis affectus liberi non sunt, cum nobis nolentibus interdum surgant et deficiant. Non ita Christus commotus est, sed se ipsum Christus turbavit, ut indicetur, turbationem hanc Christi non ex infirmitate, sed ex potestate esse." And Piscator, following up a hint in Calvin's commentary, has this illustration: "Quemadmodum aqua pura ac limpida vitro puro infusa, si agitetur, spumas quidem concipit, sed turbida non fit; infusa autem vitro impuro ac sordido, si agitetur, non solum spumas concipit, sed etiam turbida sordidaque redditur: ita cor Christi ab omni vitio purum, affectibus humanæ naturæ insitis, agitatum quidem fuit, sed nullo peccato sordidatum; at corda nostra affectibus ita agitantur, ut peccato nobis inhærente sordidentur."

[1] De Wette, *Sittenlehre*, Th. i. p. 188. On the question of the Divine anger and human anger, and whether there be in the latter a necessary element of sin, *vid.* Weber's *Vom Zorne Gottes*, pp. 21–24. And on the outward manifestation of anger, right only when in proportion to the emotion felt, *vid.* Rothe, *Ethik*, ii. pp. 87, 88.

historical character of this narrative, and so of the whole fourth Gospel, of which it is acknowledged to form an integral part. This angry groaning in spirit, notwithstanding all that can be said regarding it, does appear at first sight inconsistent with the character of our Lord as otherwise set before us, and specially inconsistent with the whole circumstances in which it is said to have been exhibited. So psychologically improbable—even incredible—does it seem, that many, as has already been shown, have recourse to various ways of escaping from the natural meaning of the word which describes it. · They have tried to twist the "groaning in the spirit" into a sense which it cannot possibly bear, in order to bring it into harmony with the supposed requirements of the context. May we not conclude, then, that this strong emotion on the part of our Lord would never have found its way into the description of this miracle at all, unless it had actually happened? It would not have occurred to any one who was drawing merely upon his imagination, or was seeking to clothe in the garb of allegory some doctrinal truth. Considered from this point of view, it is unnatural — unlikely in the extreme. It is therefore to be accounted for only on the supposition that the writer had been an eye-witness, and that he faithfully and accurately recorded what was fact, however inexplicable to his readers that fact at first sight might seem. This much may be said, in passing, against the view of one of the ablest of recent writers on the Life of Christ—Dr. Keim. That author goes so far as to say that there can no longer be any doubt as to the unhistorical character of this narrative, and, in opposition to almost universal opinion, declares it to be an over-refined and stilted story, with a Christology

unnaturally twisted and confused.[1] We hold the very opposite conclusion to be borne out by the facts of the case.

We now proceed to inquire into the reason why our Lord "groaned in the spirit, and was troubled." We have made, as it were, our observations — we have ascertained and noted the facts; we have now to search out the causes which underlie them. The narrative helps us in this inquiry, but only indirectly. It tells us the occasion, but nothing more. It does not expressly state the cause. It is plainly said, "When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, He groaned in the spirit, and was troubled." The place where He was had been transformed into a very Bochim (Judg. ii. 5), for "the people lifted up their voice, and wept." On their part, it was loud weeping—wailing; they mourned with all the external expression of grief (κλαίοντας). Jesus Himself, on the other hand, wept with the gentle, silent flow of tears (ver. 35, ἐδάκρυσεν). The time, too, was that solemn, sacred hour when many hearts, widely apart in their general sympathies, are yet by a common sorrow made one, thus realising the ancient definition of friendship—one heart in many bodies. Such was the occasion of our Lord's angry commotion of spirit. But it was in no sense the cause. True, His fellow-feeling was deep and strong. His tears were tears of tenderest sympathy. In the sinlessness of His

[1] Keim's *Geschichte Jesu*, vol. iii. pp. 70, 71: "In der That, eine verkünstelte, auf Stelzen gehende Geschichte und eine unnatürlich geschraubte, Mensch und Gott verwechselnde Christologie." Sanday (*Authorship and Historical Character of the Fourth Gospel*, pp. 180–190), though not alluding to the point above mentioned, has some good observations on the unconscious individual touches of nature and truth which this chapter displays.

complete humanity, He could enter more fully into others' sorrow, than any of His people ever can. He Himself, "the very fountain of pity," could not but "weep with them that weep." But we find in all this no explanation of His wrath. The prominence given by the Evangelist to His *grief*, so far from explaining, only makes His *anger* the more inexplicable.

In seeking, then, to assign an adequate cause to this unusual manifestation, we may set aside several views as at once failing to appeal to our judgment. De Wette, *e.g.*, entirely misses the mark, when he says that Christ's agitation of spirit arose chiefly from feeling that the death of Lazarus, and all its accompanying sorrows, could not have been avoided. Nor, again, can we accept the kindred view so touchingly stated and enforced by Cyprian, in an epistle to the Presbyter Tyrasius, of condolence with him on the loss of a much-beloved daughter,—the view that our Lord was mournfully filled with emotion, because, for the sake of others, He had to restore His friend to earth's struggles and toils.[1] Nor are those Greek commen-

[1] *Vid.* Cyprian, Hartel's edition, 1871, vol. iii. p. 276. The argument, though it proceeds on a misunderstanding of ἐνεβριμήσατο, is so beautifully stated, that its quotation may be allowed here :—"Plane mortuum Lazarum flevit, sed non tuis lacrymis. Resurrectionis promissor dolorem docere non poterat, ne fidem perfidiam faceret quam docebat. Doluit Lazarum non dormientem, sed potius resurgentem, et flebat quem cogebatur propter salvandos alios et confundendos incredulos sæculo revocare. Hanc vitam dans Dominus ingemiscebat, quam tu doles esse sublatam. Contra lacrymas ejus pugnant lacrymæ tuæ, et amor tuus amori Ejus. Ejus fletus non habet parem. Ille nolebat reddere laboribus quem dilexerat, et tu amare te credis cui laborum volebas adhuc restare tormenta. Ceterum si putes Eum mortuum Lazarum doluisse, ante non permisisset exire qui repellere poterat mortem, aut certe non fleret qui mortuum resuscitare postmodum habuerat potestatem. Unde apparet sola Eum causa fuisse commotum quod ad hostilem vitam carissimum suum revocare denuo propter credituros aliquos vel confundendos incredulos urgebatur. Denique sic subsecutus est dicens: 'ergo, Pater,

tators and their modern representatives right, who hold that His emotion was a kind of anger with Himself,—a struggle to repress the rising of His own feelings, as, if not unworthy of Him, at least interfering with what He had to do;—an effort, in other words, which He made to check His tears, so that He might be able to speak the words, "Where have ye laid him?" Alford, *e.g.*, says, "What minister has not, when burying the dead in the midst of a weeping family, felt the emotion, and made the effort, here described? And surely this was one of the things in which He was made like unto His brethren!" But this view is based, although Alford himself disclaims it, upon what we have already seen to be a wrong rendering of the passage, a making τῷ πνεύματι the dative governed by the verb, whereas that dative describes the nature of the anger, not in any way the object of it.[1] Besides, it is to be noticed that no reference is made to any emotion, preceding this groaning in spirit, which needed to be restrained; and still further, if a struggle with self be what is mentioned, then it was an unsuccessful struggle, for we are told immediately afterwards that "Jesus wept." This view, too, however reverently held and carefully guarded, verges upon an unworthy conception of our Lord; and it fails entirely to satisfy what is required by so very strong a word as "He groaned."

ut credant quoniam Tu Me misisti.' Gaude ergo unde Ille coactus est flere, ne videaris dormientum felicitatibus invidere. Ab alieno mundo ad proprium transivit, transivit ad Dominum, et de hostili patria ad paternam patriam migravit."

[1] The same remark applies substantially to Steinmeyer, who speaks of our Lord's emotion as "eine gegen die Regungen seiner eigenen Psyche gerichteten pneumatischen Thätigkeit des Herrn." Steinmeyer's *Wunderthaten des Herrn*, p. 196; though there the author is discussing another miracle.

If, then, the cause of our Lord's vehement anger is not to be found at all in Himself, is it to be sought in those who were around Him—in the sisters, the disciples, the Jews—in any or all of them? May it not be said that although His groaning in spirit was not itself mourning, it may have been caused by the mourning of others? Was He angry at all this weeping of theirs, regarding it as excessive, and reproving it as blameworthy? No. On a similar occasion, it is true (if indeed the occasion be similar),—in Jairus' house, He said, "Why make ye this ado and weep?" But the justification of the rebuke there lies on the very surface of the narrative. It was called forth by "the tumult" (Mark v. 38)—the noisy obsequies already commenced, and by the apparent levity even of "them that wept and wailed greatly," for "they laughed Him to scorn." But here the circumstances are of a totally different kind. Besides, granting that in this case the general expression of grief was inordinate, and needed some reproof, so strong an outgoing of indignation on our Lord's part, as the verb indicates, is inconceivable. It was foretold of Him, "A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench." We cannot therefore think of Him here as meeting the bitterness of their anguish by the exceeding sharpness of His reproof. On the contrary, so far from chiding their tears, He willingly mingled with them His own.

But, again, it has been held that our Lord's anger was directed against the formal, false mourning of the Jews—their tears of so-called sympathy contrasting with the hardness of their hearts—their spurious sorrow in the presence of so much that was genuine. But whatever the feelings of these men were towards Him,

we do them wrong, if we deny them the credit of sincerity in their friendship for Lazarus, and their sorrow at his death. Theirs were not what Meyer calls them—crocodile tears.

Once more, the view has received very large support,[1] that our Lord was sore displeased at the evidences of unbelief and the misconception of His person and power which everywhere disclosed themselves. He saw prevailing a state of feeling which threatened to make the very working of the miracle an impossibility. The disciples, especially Thomas, Martha, and even Mary, she

"Whose eyes were homes of silent prayer,"

and some of the better-disposed Jews,—their faith all quenched in their tears! Must not Jesus have been moved with a holy indignation in the presence of this almost invincible power of unbelief, exemplified as it was here even in His most faithful followers? Was not faith (ver. 40) the very condition under which alone the manifestation of the Father's glory in the Son's work of power could take place? And now it appeared that, after all His works and all His words seen and heard for these three years, that faith was awanting —He was not recognised and welcomed as "the Resurrection and the Life" (ver. 25). Instead of waiting with expectant hearts, even His own followers were weeping as those who had no hope, and so were actually themselves standing in the way of His bringing them help, the very help which they needed but dared not ask. But this view, as well as those

[1] From such opposite poles of doctrine as are represented by Strauss and Bishop Wordsworth, and many others. It is also the view of Keim. It seems best stated and urged by Wichelhaus, *Leidensgeschichte*, pp. 66, 67.

already alluded to, must be surrendered. There is no distinct reference whatever in the immediate context to so great hardness of heart; and after all, the tenor of the narrative does not justify, at least so far as the sisters and the disciples are concerned, so harsh an estimate of their character and conduct.

We conclude, then, that we have not yet caught sight of the true explanation. We have not yet discovered the adequate and satisfactory cause of our Lord's angry agitation of spirit. This wrath, so exceptionally striking, could not have for its object Himself, for though He "endured contradiction of sinners *against* Himself" (Heb. xii. 3 A.V.), He knew such contradiction *within* Himself. In all the fulness and consequent perfection of His humanity He could not be in any sense what each one of His followers is, "a double-minded man" (compare Jas. i. 8 and iv. 8). Nor could the object of this holy anger be the weak, sorrowing, or even unbelieving men and women before Him; not, assuredly, His own impotence—not the excessive sorrow or the hypocrisy and unbelief of others. The divine anger of the Son of man, at so critical a moment of His life as this, demands another and very different object. That object must be sought in some mighty hostile power, which was now with peculiar violence and malignity rising up against Him.

What we consider to be the right explanation is approached—comes at least partially into sight—when we say that our Lord was now, in view of the miracle He was about to work, with a holy indignation preparing and arming Himself against death.[1] We do not mean here

[1] Cornelius a Lapide quotes here the saying of Cicero, applying it to our Lord, that anger is often the whetstone of courage. "Ira enim est cos virtutis et fortitudinis."

death in its special aspect as "the wages of sin." For we have to bear in mind that, as "death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. v. 13), there is a sense in which bodily dissolution itself is to be regarded as simply the manifested power of the divine anger;[1] and to say that our Lord's wrath was directed against this would be, in effect, to say that it was directed against that which was the manifestation of itself. It would, in other words, be wrath called forth against His own decree. The Psalmist (Ps. xc. 7), recognising the connection between suffering and death on the one hand, and the divine anger against sin on the other, says, "We are *consumed* in Thine anger, and in Thy *wrath* are we troubled. Thou hast set our *iniquities* before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance." Though we adopt the conclusion that bodily death pertains to the normal, necessary condition of man, it is none the less evident that it has assumed a new ethical significance by the fact of sin. If the whole form and meaning of man's *life* has been reversed by the entrance of moral evil into our world, so equally has it been with his *death*.[2] It might have been, and, but for sin, would have been, an easy, painless passage from this world to another, as Hesiod[3] fabled of men in their state of primeval innocence, in the golden age, that they used to die without pain or bodily decay, but as if subdued by sleep—

θνῆσκον δ' ὡς ὕπνῳ δεδμημένοι.

But by the universal presence of sin, death has become

[1] Man's "Sterben ist nichts anders als Gottes Zorn wider die σάρξ." *Vid.* Weber's *Vom Zorne Gottes*, p. 104.

[2] *Vid.* Martensen's *Christliche Dogmatik*, p. 195.

[3] *Works and Days*, 116.

invested with a punitive character. It speaks now, in all the circumstances which attend it, of human transgression, and so, likewise, of divine wrath. It is in the strictest sense penal, although we are permitted to say of it, "howbeit our God has turned the curse into a blessing." The sting of death, in the conflict with the Prince of Life, being thrust into His side, has been lost there. It has no longer any power to punish, over those who are "crucified together with Christ." We have to remember, therefore, that it is not this aspect of death, as the object of our Lord's anger, which here comes into prominence; it is rather death in the aspect of a universal, unconquerable destroyer—death as hostile to God's kingdom and its peace.[1] The Saviour was standing now in the very presence of its ravages. His all-embracing spirit, too, rose up from the isolated case before Him to the contemplation of all. He was tracing everywhere the reign of death. The whole earth to Him was but the "valley of the shadow of death." Hence, while there were, as we have observed already, abundant evidences of His sorrow (ver. 35), there were also the clearly expressed tokens of His wrath. Both are found appropriately together, the one being the natural complement of the other, just as once before we find it was, when "He looked round about with *anger*, being *grieved*" (Mark iii. 5). But this is not all. Behind the presence of death, there was the awful reality, not only of sin, "the sting of death," but also of him through whom sin came,—him who is in

[1] Delitzsch, on Hebrews ii. 14, well states the two aspects in which death presents itself to us, as these are alluded to above. He speaks of death as at once "eine richterliche Machtwirkung Gottes," and "eine gottfeindliche Machtwirkung des Teufels." It is the latter of these which is to be kept in view, when we speak of our Lord's anger in the presence of death.

this Gospel so frequently called "the Prince of this world." If, then, we would rightly understand the true meaning of our Lord's wrath, His visibly-expressed indignation, we must regard Him here as confronting in conflict the great enemy of His kingdom,—the destroyer of the race which He Himself had come to save. It is only, we believe, at this stage of our discussion that we come face to face with the solution of the difficulty which the theme presents. As at the beginning of His official life, in His temptation in the wilderness, so now at the close of it, our Lord appears in near conflict with him who bears the name of the enemy (Matt. xiii. 39), and who wields the power of the last enemy (1 Cor. xv. 26), that is, death.[1] This view has the advantage of satisfying what some consider to be one of the conditions of the problem, for it has been frequently pointed out that the anger expressed by such a word as "groaned" must be understood as directed against some personal enemy. There is indeed no absolute necessity for this, as reference to Matt. vii. 26, Luke iv. 39, at once shows; but, at the same time, the fact that this view does suggest such a personal adversary, is an "adminicle" in the evidence, an argument of some value in its favour. Our Lord, as He looked on this, and abroad on all other heart-desolation in the world, and in the contemplation thereof—

"As the whole woe billow-like broke on Him,"

knew that "an enemy hath done this"; and it was against this enemy that He here summoned forth His wrath.

[1] The Rabbins speak of Satan as the angel of death, *vid.* Wisd. ii. 24, and in Heb. ii. 14 he is called "the holder of the power of death," τὸ κράτος ἔχοντα τοῦ θανάτου. The genitive is there not the genitive subjecti, as

But it may perhaps be objected here that in the whole record of this miracle there is no reference to this enemy to be found. There is, however, not much force in this objection; for although allusion to him be not directly expressed, his presence and the hostile influence of his kingdom are everywhere implied. With special distinctness can we trace such an illusion in vers. 9 and 10. Whatever meaning we attach to these somewhat difficult words, there is little doubt that in accordance with the symbolical use of the terms in St. John's writings the "day" and the "night" there refer to the two kingdoms—that of light and that of darkness, that of Christ and that of Satan, which are in ceaseless conflict with each other.[1] If then, in accordance with the spirit of the passages just cited, we carry along with us the thought that our Lord in this case recognised the presence and working of the arch-enemy himself, and that He, the Redeemer, came to ransom man from the power of the adversary,—"to enter the strong man's house, and bind him, and spoil his goods" (Mark iii. 27),—we have the key which appears most easily to fit the locks of the problem. We discover in

Ebrard would have it, making the clause mean, "the power which death has over us," but the genitive objecti.

[1] As Rothe[1] well puts it, "Der Teufel ist in Gottes Welt eine nicht legitime und von Gotte anerkannte, aber *thatsächliche* Macht, die Gott nicht ignoriren kann." And Weber's[2] words may be cited here as bearing somewhat directly upon this part of our subject: "Als der Feind Gottes und seiner Schöpfung ist er ein Verderber im Gebiete der σάρξ. Auflösung, Zerstörung göttlicher Werke ist seine Lust. Darum nennt ihn der Herr einen ἀνθρωποκτόνος. Damit greift er weit über den Brudermord Kains, auch weit über die Verführung zurück, in welcher das Todesurtheil über den Menschen verwirkt worden ist; sobald der Mensch in's Dasein tritt, ist auch Satan auf sein Verderben gerichtet . . . denn er (der Mensch) ist Gottes Geschöpf bestimmt für Gottes Reich, und darum schon ein Objekt der verderbensvollen Absicht Satans."

[1] *Vid.* his *Stille Stunden*, p. 75. [2] *Vom Zorne Gottes*, p. 113.

this way what at once explains the exceptionally mighty perturbation of spirit. It was, as it were, the throwing down of the gauntlet to the enemy of souls,—a "Get thee behind Me, Satan, for thou art an offence unto Me." Thus it was that "His fury it upheld Him," while He asked, in the midst of His tears, "Where have ye laid him?" and cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." Thus it was that He girded Himself, in the words of Cornelius a Lapide, "ad arduum cum morte duellum."[1]

This exposition, by no means unknown, as we have seen, to ancient and modern exegesis, admits of a very important development still. While we regard it as in the right direction, we think it may be carried somewhat further. It does not appear that the passage would suffer any undue strain were we to see in it the foreshadowing, and indeed the actual beginning, of our Lord's final conflict with Satan in His own passion—"the hour and the power of darkness." Gumlich, whose study of this sign is throughout so exhaustive and satisfactory, expressly excludes this view, but he does so without at all assigning a reason. Let us see then what can be said in its favour. Our Lord had wrought miracles of this kind—the raising of the dead—before. But in the accounts we have of these miracles, we find no reference whatever to any outburst of holy anger similar to that which appears with so much prominence now. He must further have often refrained from

[1] This view of our passage is, upon the whole, well represented by Nicolaus Herman, the singer of many well-known quaint "Kinder-und Hauslieder" (sixteenth century). One of these hymns is a rhythmical version of this chapter. In it we read—

> "Jhesus in seinem Geist ergrimt,
> unser elend durchs Hertz Ihm dringt
> und thet Ihm weh das wir vom Feindt
> in den jammer gefuhret seindt."—*Wackernagel*, iii. 1213.

working such miracles, when He saw sorrow in the presence of death, and "the mourners go about the streets." We have to seek, therefore, and if possible discover, the motive for His interposition in this case, and also for the display of anger which accompanied that interposition—that anger being, as we have said, a characteristic of this miracle only. In other words, why did He work this miracle at all, and why, in working it, did the presence of death and of him who has the power of death so affect Him? It can hardly be that He interfered for the simple reason that Lazarus was His friend—the object of His special regard and love (vers. 3, 5, and 11). Nor can it be sufficient to say that His holy wrath was stirred within Him because He saw death daring to touch the inner circle of His friendship, and that this threatening advance of the enemy was consequently met by this threatening advance of His in return. So Luthardt, but not quite satisfactorily: his explanation is right so far, but it does not go far enough. Nor was our Lord's purpose in turning the shadow on the sun-dial of Lazarus' life a few degrees backward merely to comfort the mourners, whose interests lay so near to His heart. Some other motive, or rather, some additional motive, and one, too, of the highest and most urgent kind, must certainly be sought. For this very significant fact is to be kept steadily in view, that the wonder-working power over death which these miracles—these preludes of the resurrection—display, was, during our Lord's whole ministry, very sparingly exercised. Perhaps something helpful to our present inquiry may be learned from the only parallel case recorded, viz. the raising of the widow's son from the bier at the gate of Nain. As for the raising of Jairus' daughter from

the bed, it possibly admits of doubt whether it were actually the bed of death or not, and so we leave that instance out of our consideration. Turning then to the miracle wrought at Nain (Luke vii. 11), we find that the motive for our Lord's working it seems closely connected with His own approaching Passion. His interest in the circumstances of the case appears to have sprung out of the thoughts regarding Himself which these circumstances suggested to His own mind. The young man who had died was "the only son of his mother, and she was a widow," and Jesus "had compassion on her;" and after He had restored the dead to life, it is written that "He delivered him to his mother." Placing these statements together, we are led to conclude that our Lord's motive for interference lay in what the widow's bereavement brought forcibly home to Him regarding His own suffering and death. His heart was touched, not merely by the spectacle of her great sorrow, but also because He turned in thought from the contemplation of the scene before Him to that other "Mater dolorosa," whom He was ere long to see standing at the foot of His own cross—"a sword piercing through her own soul also." She, too, was a widow, and He, in one sense, was her only son, and hers was an anguish deeper far than that which was felt by the widow of Nain. It is allowable to suppose that the thought of this coming incident in His Passion, suggested to Him by the so far similar case before Him, formed His chief motive for the working of the miracle.

If this be so, then the supposition gains very strong probability that in the greater miracle of the raising of Lazarus—nearer as it was in point of time to "His hour," and also the occasion, as it actually was, of

hastening on that hour,—for we are told (ver. 53) "from that day forth they took counsel together for to put Him to death"—the motive is to be found in what it foreshadowed. Our Lord knew, in other words, that there lay in Lazarus' death a hidden reference to His own. The death of His friend was thus in itself, and apparently it was intended that it should be (vers. 6, 15), a prophecy of His own. The whole narrative, even to a cursory reader, yields itself very readily to this supposition. We see, *e.g.*, in vers. 7–10 and ver. 16, how steadily and clearly His approaching suffering and death were in His view, and also in the view of His disciples. As He went forward with His followers from Peræa into Judæa to "awake Lazarus out of sleep," He knew that He was then going forth Himself to die; and the latter part of the chapter (vers. 46–57) amply justifies the old saying, "vita Lazari, mors Christi." Our Lord then, we conclude, was now, as "He groaned in the spirit, and was troubled," turning away in thought from the scene of heart-desolation immediately before Him to that other scene already in the near future,—to that other sepulchre in the garden of Joseph of Arimathea. The shadow of His own death was now falling upon Him as He thought of the conflict; and perchance there was also the light of anticipated triumph breaking through that darkness, as He thought of the mourning women at His own tomb, at last finding, as Martha and Mary did here, their sorrow turned by His resurrection into joy.

Here, therefore, we have (ver. 4) the Son of God glorified in this, that the death of Lazarus, followed as it was by his resurrection, symbolically pointed to that death and resurrection by which the Wonder-worker

Himself was to glorify God. Accepting this view of the narrative, we find the angry perturbation of spirit, which forms the chief difficulty in it, at once explained and justified. It now appears in its true light, as caused by the immediate presence of him who has the power of death, and by that presence being regarded by our Lord as the signal of the first near beginnings of the mysterious conflict of the Passion,—the conflict foretold in the Protevangelium, and decided in its issues on the cross, and yet going on still in Christ's people throughout all time, till the consummation of all things—"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel."

In support of this conclusion, it may be noticed that, in addition to the passage under consideration, there are only in the Gospels other two which speak of Christ's being "troubled in spirit" or "troubled in soul." They are both found in the fourth Gospel, chap. xii. 27 and chap. xiii. 21; and they both represent this trouble of the Son of man as arising from the contemplation of His own Passion: there is therefore a presumption that His troubling of Himself here owes its origin to the same cause. The same may also be said with regard to His weeping. It is remarkable that, in addition to that of our narrative, there are only two other instances recorded of our Lord's shedding tears, viz. Luke xix. 41 and Heb. v. 7. These three instances all relate to events near each other as to time,—"the hour and power of darkness,"—"My hour," as Christ Himself calls it,—the season of His Passion. Even as to locality, the events to which these weepings belong are all near each other. The neighbourhood of Bethany, the brow

of Mount Olivet, the garden of Gethsemane, these witnessed His sorrow. And further, in the two other cases these tears were certainly shed in close connection with the thought of His Passion : is there not reason, consequently, to say the same of this third case—the tears which fell before this miracle was wrought? These considerations, of no great force indeed in themselves and singly, yet taken together, point, with some persuasive power, to the conclusion we have reached.

We therefore conclude that our Lord's angry groaning in spirit in the presence of death here receives its most natural and only satisfactory explanation in this, that He was turning in spirit from Lazarus' death to His own last struggle, in which, as Chrysostom has it, "His own death became the death of death." His wrath was but the visible outgoing of His perfect holiness, in the presence of evil, as He felt in His own words of anticipated triumph that the Prince of this world was coming, but could have nothing in Him, and that even then He could say, "Now is the Prince of this world cast out." Thus, what holds good of the emotion of anger in a merely human breast is absolutely, fully true of the anger of the Son of man —this "wrath of the Lamb,"—that it is but another form of love. His anger directed against man's foe, proves the reality and power of His love, as Himself man's true friend. The Divine love and anger, revealed in our Lord, are both flames of the same fire, the one that which quickens, the other that which consumes. The eye of faith, therefore, can see, gleaming through the storm-cloud of this wrath, "the glory of God" (vers. 4, 40),—the glory of Him who to all who believe is even now "the Resurrection and the Life."

It may be noticed in this connection that the work-

ing of this miracle was specially adapted, perhaps designed, to meet the spiritual need of our Lord's immediate disciples. If Thomas, "the melancholy realist," as we have seen him called, was in any degree the representative and spokesman of his brethren, we know that at this time a thick gloom was settling gradually down upon them. Their hearts were becoming daily more depressed with undefined forebodings of evil. But the end was not yet: their faith in their Master was very soon to encounter a trial far greater, far more testing, than any it had yet experienced. His approaching crucifixion was certain to give, as we know it did give, a shock to all their erroneous Jewish prepossessions regarding the person and work of the Messiah. But the remembrance of this miracle was well fitted to give them strength in the hour of weakness, so that the issue of that trial might not prove altogether disastrous, destructive to their allegiance. Even when their hopes seemed buried in the sepulchre in the garden, their thoughts doubtless reverted to this incident; and in the contemplation of it they found something of comfort for

> "Their breaking hearts, that would not break."

Notwithstanding their "slowness of heart to believe" (Luke xxiv. 25), they may have had, like the friends of Lazarus in *their* grief, some dim, undefined expectation, that He who had wrought this miracle could also in some way for Himself "turn the shadow of death into the morning." We may be allowed to suppose that some such loving interest in His disciples may have formed a subsidiary motive for our Lord's restoring to life one who was His friend and theirs alike.

We have thus endeavoured to show that, whatever

mode of exposition we adopt,—whether with patristic exaggeration we spiritualise all the minutiæ of the narrative, or with equal or greater and far more serious error, resolve, as Keim and others do, the whole into an outgrowth from the corresponding parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke xvi. 19–31),—the very heart of the narrative is in this 33rd verse, and that in it there beats the very heart of our Lord Himself.

In concluding this discussion, we may notice a very interesting parallel in the *Alcestis* of Euripides. In that drama we have the vivid picture of the hero Hercules—

> "Half God,
> Half man, which made the God-part, God the more"

—encountering Thanatos in personal conflict, and overcoming him at the tomb, and then restoring to light and life the pure, devoted, self-sacrificing Alcestis. Even although the myth which underlies that poem be resolved, as in all probability it ought to be, into one of the myths of the Dawn,[1] we are yet warranted in regarding it, along with much else in the beautiful creations of the Greek mind, as a broken reflection of the truth. Hence the comment, which Browning[2] makes on the poem of Euripides, may stand here as our comment on the holy anger and the tears of Him who is the true Helper of our world—

> "I think this is the authentic sign and seal
> Of Godship, that it ever waxes glad
> And more glad, until gladness blossoms, bursts
> Into a *rage* to suffer for mankind,
> And recommence at *sorrow*."

---

[1] *Vid.* Cox, *Aryan Mythology*, vol. ii. p. 41.

[2] *Vid. Balaustion's Adventure.*

VIII.

"Ἁλιεὺ μερόπων
Τῶν σωζομένων,
Πελαγοῦς κακίας
Ἰχθῦς ἀγνοὺς
Κύματος ἐχθροῦ
Γλυκερῇ ζωῇ δελεάζων."

Hymnus Christi Servatoris a Sancto Clemente Alexandrino Compositus.

"Fisher of mortal men,
All that the saved are,
Ever the holy fish
From the wild ocean
Of the world's sea of sin
By Thy sweet life Thou enticest away."

ARCHB. TRENCH'S *Translation.*

THE SECOND MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT OF FISHES.

THE SECOND MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT OF FISHES.

(John xxi. 1–14.)

I. THE EXPOSITION.

THE fourth Gospel begins with the inaugural miracle at Cana of Galilee. Thereupon follow three pairs of miracles, setting forth, as we have endeavoured to show, distinct aspects of our Lord's manifested glory in His kingdom,—signs, in the region of things material and visible, of realities in the spiritual, the ἄνω κόσμος. The individual, the Church, the world, are represented severally in these pairs as being blessed in Him.

We now reach the final sign, the supplemental eighth. While it claims close fellowship with those which precede it, yet, like the first, it stands also very manifestly apart. It has its appropriate place in a supplemental chapter of the book,—in what may be called the epilogue to the whole treatise, just as chap. i. 1–14 is its prologue.[1]

Once more, then, we stand in spirit on the shore of the Sea of Galilee or Tiberias—

[1] The genuineness of this chapter has, since the time of Grotius, been much called in question. Authorities on the point are tolerably equally balanced. Keim, whose treatment of this chapter is marred by special pleading, calls it a spurious addendum. Others strongly defend it as an integral part of the Gospel, or, at all events, as an after-thought of the author. There is a good defence of its genuineness to be found in Wordsworth's *Commentary*, and also in Dr. Sanday's *Authorship and Historical Character of the Fourth Gospel*, chap. xvii. He, however, like Dr. Weiss, confounds this miracle with that of Luke's Gospel.

"Clear silver water in a cup of gold,
Under the sunlit steeps of Gadara,
It shines—His lake—the sea of Chinnereth—
The waves He loved, the waves that kissed His feet
So many blessed days. Oh, happy waves!
Oh, little, silver, happy sea, far-famed,
Under the sunlit steeps of Gadara."

Many memories gather around the region. With unwonted pathos Mark Twain has thus written of it: "In the lapping of the waves upon the beach the visitor hears the dip of ghostly oars; in the secret noises of the night he hears spirit-voices; in the soft sweep of the breeze, the rush of invisible wings. Phantom-ships are on the sea, the dead of twenty centuries come forth from the tombs, and in the dirges of the night-wind the songs of old forgotten ages find utterance again."[1] But it is not the "steel-shod keels of Roman galleys;" it is not "Herod's painted pinnaces, ablaze with lamps and brazen shields and spangled slaves;" it is not all the pomp of a vanished worldly past that rises before the spirit's eye, as thought turns to this lake. It is rather, and far above all else, the associations which cling to it of the Divine Son of man.

Here we are confronted with the last of these. We see once more an act of wonder and of power—but now it is an act of the Risen Saviour. It is a post-resurrection sign. In this respect, as compared with the others recorded in this Gospel, it stands peerless and alone. It is this peculiarity which chiefly suggests its value and significance. "The story is related sketchily, though suggestively, but gives very few details," so says Dr. Weiss. "This is an idyllic scene of more than human beauty," so says Dr Laidlaw, with surer insight and more spiritual appreciation. Ruskin,

[1] *Excursion to Europe and the Holy Land*, p. 512.

best of all, says:[1] "I suppose there is no event in the whole life of Christ to which, in hours of doubt or fear, men turn with more anxious thirst to know the close facts of it, or with more earnest and passionate dwelling upon every syllable of its recorded narrative, than Christ's showing Himself to His disciples at the Lake of Galilee. There is something pre-eminently open, natural, full fronting our disbelief, in this manifestation. The others, recorded after the resurrection, were sudden, phantom-like, occurring to men in profound sorrow and wearied agitation of heart, not, it might seem, safe judges of what they saw. But the agitation was now over. They had gone back to their daily work, thinking still their business lay net-wards, unmeshed from the literal rope and drag." Whether this view of the disciples' feeling and action be correct or not, these words of our great English writer reveal a true conception of this miracle.

"After these things,"—in this recognised and characteristic formula does the Evangelist resume his narrative. The phrase is quite indefinite. It implies, as we have had previous occasion to notice, not immediate succession, but the existence of an indefinite interval. It therefore does no more than point to some one of the mysterious forty days between our Lord's resurrection and His ascension, but which of these is left undetermined. "Jesus manifested Himself again to His disciples at the Sea of Tiberias." These followers of His had returned thither after the momentous incidents which had just taken place. Possibly they had done so "from fear of the Jews," as well as in obedience to their Master's own express desire. He had said:[2] "After I am raised up, I will go before you into Galilee." The

[1] *Frondes Arestes*, p. 152. [2] Matt. xxvi. 32.

Lake had its attraction for them, from its tender associations with earlier years,—the sacred memories of their training to higher things, alike by precept and parable and work of power. It was, above all, the scene of their first call to become "fishers of men." Our Lord "manifested Himself again,"—once more, the word pointing back to the two previous manifestations, just recorded in xx. 19 and 26. But why is His appearing called a manifestation? The term is peculiar, and is distinctly to be regarded as one characteristic of the Evangelist. It serves to describe the appearing as a coming forth out of that mysterious invisibility, which since His resurrection had been His — His coming forth into the ken—the notice of His disciples. It suggests His appearing no longer in what St. Paul calls "the body of our humiliation,"[1] "this clog and clod of clay," but in the glorified corporeity, at least in its early transition stage, of His heavenly life. The manifestation therefore of Himself was now of necessity at the same time the manifestation of His divine glory.

"On this wise" did it happen. There were seven disciples together on the shore of the Lake. Five of these were followers who had been early called,—"first the denier, and then the slowest believer, and then the quickest believer, and then the two throne-seekers,"—thus does Ruskin describe "Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee." But what about the "two other of His disciples"? It is thought by some, but with no good reason, that these may have been disciples only in the wider, more general sense of the term, and that they are unnamed here because they are not mentioned in the course of the treatise. To recognise,

[1] Phil. iii. 21.

as Godet does, in these anonymous disciples Aristion and the Presbyter John, men who almost ranked in later days as apostles, is a view somewhat too ingenious to command assent. It is far more probable that the two are Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, and Philip, Nathanael's friends, for it is, we must bear in mind, to the seven disciples, in the narrower sense of the designation, that is to say, men who were afterwards apostles,[1] that this sign is granted as a promise, a foreshadowing of apostolic success. These seven men were, most of them, natives of the Lake-shore. The mood in which they found themselves, now that they had returned to the familiar spot, was still, notwithstanding all that had happened, one of mingled bewilderment and expectation. But suddenly, with something of the abrupt, prompt decision so characteristic of his nature, Simon Peter exclaims, "I go a fishing!" His impetuous spirit, weighed down by a sense of bereavement, seeks relief in return to accustomed work,—trying perchance in this way

> "With Memory's spell to fetch the good hours back
> When He was near."

Weighed down, further, by an overpowering sense of grief, because of recent personal defection, he seeks, in restless and possibly aimless activity, some "surcease of sorrow." A conception of Peter's state of mind such as this, which does not imply the complete surrender of his faith and hope, seems better than that which would directly ascribe to him the entire renunciation of all his fondly cherished hopes,—the going back in disappointment and sheer despair to his former occupation, and the futile desire to forget all the past in

[1] This, however, is a moot point in regard to Nathanael.

present work. So Cox strives to represent him. He makes Peter say in effect, "I give it up. He will not come. We are the mere fools of hope. Let us go back to our old state and our old work." He further adds, "The proposal to go a fishing was the virtual renunciation of their hope to see Christ again before He went up on high." This view substantially ascribes to Peter, and that very unnecessarily, another fall, another practical and very decided denial of his Lord. He and his fellows had repaired to the Lake rather than to "the mountain where Jesus had appointed them,"[1] and in doing so—in forgetting His injunction—they of their own accord laid themselves open to this new trial and failed. They had deliberately abandoned the course which had been given them, they had gone back to the life of mere earthly industry from which they had been called, and thus they had "forsaken their own mercy." This seems also to be Ruskin's view as represented by his words already cited, and that also of Arthur Clough in the lines—

"Ye men of Galilee!
Why stand ye looking up to heaven, where Him ye ne'er may see,
Neither ascending hence, nor returning hither again?
Ye ignorant and idle fishermen!
Hence to your huts, and boats, and inland native shore,
And catch not men, but fish;
Whate'er things ye might wish,
Him neither here nor there ye e'er shall meet with more.
Ye poor deluded youths, go home,
Mend the old nets ye left to roam,
Tie the split oar, patch the torn sail:
It was an 'idle tale'—
He was not risen!"

But it is extremely difficult to ascribe to the disciples such an entire eclipse of faith as is implied in these delineations. There were surely at least gleams, even

[1] Matt. xxviii. 16.

amidst the gloom of their hearts, which kept their faith alive.

Peter's ready utterance of his resolution finds equally ready response from his fellow-disciples. With one accord, perturbed in spirit as they too were, they say, "We also come with thee." At once, therefore, they set out from the house where they are lodging, either at Capernaum or at Bethsaida. In the rapid, direct way in which the incident is told, we seem to have the vivid representation of an eye-witness. They "entered into the boat;" it is implied that they did so "immediately," whether the word is entitled to its place in the text or not. Further, it is to be noticed that it is not "a ship or boat," but "the boat," probably, therefore, that which Peter owned, and which once before had been his Master's pulpit (Luke v. 3). The disciples, indeed, had long before, at their Lord's command, "forsaken all"; yet that expression is not to be interpreted in any rigid, cast-iron way. They had still remaining their boats and nets, though for the time these had lain disused, and their leaving all was an act of renunciation to be spiritually rather than literally understood. But the disciples' pursuit was profitless; they passed a night of unrequited toil—"that night they took nothing." It had not been so with them on other occasions. It was an unusual experience that had now befallen them. "*That* night," they felt, had strangely differed from most others. "But when day was now breaking," a new and unwonted experience was to become theirs. "Jesus stood on the beach." At eventide, and in an upper room at Jerusalem, He had previously come and stood in their midst, and given them His greeting, "Peace be unto you!" Such was the gift which He then bestowed

upon them, brought with Him, as it was, from His rifled tomb. At noonday, too, He had manifested Himself "in another form unto two of them, as they walked on their way into the country" (Mark xvi. 12), and in the recognition of His presence they had become "girded with gladness." And now in the present case we see Him in the early morning light standing before them on the sparkling sands of the beach. "Howbeit the disciples knew not that it was Jesus." Near enough the shore to hear His friendly voice, and more or less distinctly to discern His form, even although it were but dimly outlined, yet as in the parallel case of the Emmaus-disciples, "their eyes were holden that they should not know Him." He had then been looked upon as a stranger; and at another time He had been mistaken for the gardener; and now He is considered possibly to be a purchaser. But in each of these similar cases the failure in recognition was due chiefly to lack of true, living, active faith. The sundering veil was not so much with their Lord, even although "He was manifested in another form," in the transition-stage of His resurrection-body, as it was in their own hearts. "Jesus therefore said unto them, Children, have ye aught to eat? They answered Him, No!" Children! the address breathes something of gentle authority (compare 1 John ii. 13, 18). It is an eminently natural form of appellation in a teacher's intercourse with his disciples, or a master's dealings with his servants. Here it might perhaps be rendered colloquially by "Boys, lads." Familiar, kindly relationship of the speaker with those whom he addresses is chiefly implied.[1] "Aught to

[1] Maldonatus has this note: "Pueros vocat, ut ait Euthymius, quasi robustos atque valentes, quales omnes esse solent, qui se laboribus ex-

eat,"—the word appears only in this place in the New Testament. It denotes anything eaten with bread—usually fish, the staple article of diet throughout the whole Lake district. The direct, abrupt answer of weariness and despondency is "No." But now we reach the crisis of the incident. The stranger, as He was conceived to be, with an authority which evidently forbade all hesitancy or dispute, said unto them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and ye shall find." The right side; there does not seem to be anything in that, suggestive of symbolic truth, though many think otherwise. It is profitless to inquire whether we have here a miracle of power or of knowledge. It is sufficient to cite as illustrative of what took place (which, however, would point mainly to the latter view), the description of the abundance of fish in the Lake, as given by Tristram:[1] "The density of the shoals of fish in the Sea of Galilee can scarcely be conceived by those who have not witnessed them. Frequently these shoals cover an acre or more of the surface, and the fish, as they slowly move along in masses, are so crowded, with their back fins just appearing on the level of the water, that their appearance at a little distance is that of a violent shower of rain pattering on the surface." This description reminds one of what may frequently be seen in the Bodensee or Lake of Constance. It also reminds one

ercent; aut, ut ait Clemens Alexandrinus, quia domestici erant et familiares; aut, ut ego puto, tanquam vir gravis et tanquam superior cum inferioribus loquitur; solent autem superiores vocare inferiores παιδία, *pueros*, id est filios aut adolescentes, sicut apud Gallos dux milites, senex juniores se, dominus famulos et omnis superior omnes inferiores *infantes* vocare solent."

[1] *Natural History of the Bible*, p. 285, quoted by Professor Bruce, *The Miraculous Element in the Gospels*, p. 230.

of the vivid, casual, conversational word-painting of Carlyle: "The shoals of them like shining continents."[1] The disciples, inspired with new-born hope, or somewhat listlessly, it may be, merely following a natural impulse to accept a suggestion, even from a stranger, which they themselves wished to be a right one, obeyed, more especially as the suggestion or command, as indeed it was, was apparently given with the calmness of perfect confidence and authority. "And now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes." Thus obedience was at once rewarded, and that to the full. The disciples regarded, as they could not fail to do, the large haul of fish as phenomenally great, probably even as distinctly miraculous.

Here we come upon one of those natural touches of reality which all careful students of this Gospel delight to linger over. It is a vivid reproduction from life. "That disciple therefore whom Jesus loved — the bosom-disciple, John himself, shades his eyes from the morning sun with his hand, to look who it is; and though the glistening of the sea dazzles him, he makes out who it is at last."[2] He turns at once to Simon Peter and says, "It is the Lord." Peter, on hearing, at once acquiesces in the blissful discovery. Indeed, remembering a similar incident (Luke v. 1–14), we might expect to find him to be the first in this recognition; but, after all, the loving disciple, rather than the ardent, sees farthest and surest. Peter, however, not to be behind his brother-disciple, "Girt his coat about him (for he was naked), and cast himself into the sea." He was wearing simply his closely-fitting undergarment, fresh from work as he was. This

[1] Quoted by Ruskin in *Fors Clavigera*, xxxviii.

[2] Ruskin.

is all that his so-called nakedness implies. Hence at once hastily putting on his upper cloak,—his blouse or fisherman's coat, and strapping it with a belt around him,—thus attired in honour of his Master, he cast himself into the shallow waters to meet Him.[1] His impatient impetuosity brooked no delay. Surely, in passing, we may remark that he who wrote this was himself, beyond all controversy, an eye-witness. John stands forth before our view, just as we should expect, as the clinging though somewhat pensive disciple. His contemplative mood, so distinctly marked elsewhere, is indicated here, as we have already said, by his quietness of discernment—a discernment which cannot fail him in all matters where the love of the heart is concerned. He, consequently, is the first to recognise his Lord, while Peter, with equal clearness, appears delineated as the man of ready, ardent energy. His swift decision—the "vivida vis" of his nature brushing away all sluggish forethought—takes shape at once in action. As in earlier times, so more than once in later, these disciples are seen together, and with the same well-defined temperaments. They are the counterparts of one another; but they are types of character which are always loveliest when they are combined.

We read, further, that the other disciples, who by this time had also reached the point of recognition of the Saviour, "came in the little boat (for they were not far from the land, but about two hundred cubits off), dragging the net *full* of fishes." About an hundred English yards were they as yet distant from the beach. They therefore, in the smaller boat which belonged to the larger, came more leisurely, though not tardily, to the shore. There lay upon them the duty of securing

[1] ἐπενδύτην = *superindumentum*, as opposed to ὑποδύτην.

and bringing to land the great draught of fishes—the duty apparently which Peter, for the time being, had neglected in the surprise and joy of discovering his Master. Probably in this mention of the other disciples there is implied a reflection upon him; yet we feel that we love him all the better for his forgetfulness and haste. None the less, his brother-disciples claim their own due meed of praise for their foresight and care.

On disembarking, the seven disciples discern "a fire of coals," rather, of charcoal, "and fish laid thereon, and bread." It might be rendered otherwise, "a fish and a loaf." This glowing fire, along with that which was cooked upon it—whence came it? There is no allusion to any visible agency as having provided it. We can only imagine that it was there by the ministry of some unseen agency; whether angelic or not, there is nothing in the narrative to determine, and therefore it lies beyond our province and power to inquire. It was there, at least, by the Risen Saviour's will, in order that His disciples, whom He longed to meet, might be benefited and blessed.

"Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now taken." What Heaven's bounty has vouchsafed to man, man is enjoined to receive and use. Thereupon obeying, "Simon Peter went up," that is to say, went aboard, "and drew the net" (which we must conceive as still attached to the vessel) "to land, full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three." It seems puerile in the extreme to find in this number, even though it be recorded with such scrupulous exactness, any mystical significance. There are many vagaries of exposition in regard to it; but not one has claims upon our attention, far less upon our acceptance. The number is doubtless given only because the whole

incident was full of wonder, and also because the disciples, who at the time had counted them, had often talked about it long afterwards, both among themselves and to others. The number, together with the fact that the fish were large, gives picturesque colouring to the record, and, like other clauses in the section, points clearly to the testimony of an eye-witness. There is the close parallel to be found in the number of those who were fed in the desert place, and the number of baskets filled with what remained. Further, we learn that "for all there were so many, the net was not rent." In the earlier miracle, which this so much resembles, it is said "the nets were breaking."[1] But this post-resurrection sign, as we shall afterwards see, symbolises the Church of Christ, not so much in its straining earthly effort, as in its promised success and completion. In its ingathering there is in reality no rent, and no loss.[2]

"Jesus saith unto them, Come and break your fast." It is an invitation, which as a host He gives, an invitation to the early morning meal. Whether there be in it or not any sacramental import, it is hard to say. The mysterious nature of the transaction throughout would, upon the whole, incline us to think there is. This only we are told, "None of the disciples durst inquire of Him, Who art Thou? knowing that it was the Lord."[3] There has fallen upon them a hushed stillness —that of wonder and awe. "It was not now, as it had been in other days; an awful silence reigned through that solemn meal; no interchange of questions and of answers, as at the Last Supper in the upper

[1] Luke v. 1–11.

[2] Compare also the parable of the Draw-Net, Matt. xiii. 47–50.

[3] Inquire, interrogate Him. The word ἐξετάσαι is a strong one= sciscitari, the German "Ausfragen."

chamber, or as on the feeding of the five thousand on the mountain-side. He was still, indeed, the same holy and loving Master; they knew that it was the Lord, but they felt also that their relation was changed: He was now to speak, and they, except at His command, to be silent."[1] "Jesus cometh and taketh the bread, and giveth them, and the fish likewise." In this way He proceeded to act as Master of the feast; and yet it is not to be overlooked that He does not Himself, as at other times, share it with them. He, the Risen Saviour, is now the Provider, but no longer the Partaker. Nor, again, it is to be noticed, is there any mention of the customary blessing. He rather is the Giver, and to Himself is the thanksgiving to be addressed. The disciples may have been reminded, throughout this incident, of the Supper of the Lord; but we do not seem warranted to see in it, as many do, its actual celebration.

The entire narrative, with its elements of more than human tenderness and beauty, now closes with the words, "This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, after that He was risen from the dead,"—yet not, of course, the third time in regard to them all. Thomas, owing to his own morose perversity, had seen his Lord only twice. These three manifestations, and this above the others, had their deep and lasting significance for His disciples

[1] Dean Stanley, *Sermons and Essays on the Apostolical Age*, p. 137, ἐτόλμα. Augustine says: "Then if they knew, what need was there to ask? and if there was no need, why is it said, *They durst not*, as if there were need, but they did not dare to do so? Well then, the meaning is this: so mighty was the evidence of truth in the appearing of Jesus to those disciples, that none of them durst, not only deny, but even doubt; since, if any doubted, he would be bound to ask. Therefore the saying, *None of them durst ask Him, Who art Thou?* is as much as to say, None of them durst doubt that it was He." *Library of the Fathers*, p. 1071.

collectively, when henceforth as apostles and evangelists they became His witnesses to the world.

II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SIGN.

"We must not suffer ourselves to be cheated of the blessing which lies in this simple and minute narrative by vulgar efforts of the fancy to give it what is called a spiritual signification. Our spirits want to know that they have a Lord who has shared earthly food, and does not disdain us for partaking it, but who Himself bestows it and blesses it. Our spirits do not want to know why the number of fishes caught was one hundred and fifty-three; they cannot live upon meagre, childish analogies about those who were to be caught in the gospel net. Our Lord had promised His disciples that they should be fishers of men, and they were speedily to become so. But He was teaching them and us that the higher duty glorifies, instead of degrades, the lower; that every business in which men can be engaged is a calling and a ministry; that the bread which sustains the eternal life in man hallows the bread which sustains the life that is to pass away." Such is Maurice's comment, and his only comment, upon this miracle. While there is couched in it a caution to which we do well to take heed, and while it suggests a lesson from the incident which we in no wise desire to ignore, it is yet singularly meagre and defective in insight. It also parts company with an almost absolutely perfect consensus of opinion in regard to the main purpose of this miracle. The most Patristic and the most negative, as well as the most evangelical expositors, agree that it has "an echo far beyond the Galilean Lake, speaking articulately about the Church

and its mission." Indeed, this well-nigh complete unanimity is not surprising, for the significance of the sign seems clearly to break forth at many points of the narrative. True, we often meet with a strange blending of wisdom and of folly,—of spiritual insight and of puerile conceits, in the arbitrary and extravagant expositions which have been, and still are, current in the Church. Commentators appear often to have competed with one another in their eager surrender of all sober restraint. Yet it is to be borne in mind that even those who regard the incident as a supplement to the Gospel, having the main design of furthering the interests of Peter and his supremacy, unite with those of an entirely opposite school in recognising symbol throughout it. It is agreed, then, that this manifestation of our Risen Lord by the Lake is, taken as a whole, a parable in act, designed to equip the disciples for the office, with the responsibilities of which they were henceforth to be clothed. It was fitted to lay firm hold of their imagination, as a forecast of their future as they went forth in the power of "the Name"[1] to be fishers of men.

We have but to turn back in thought to the parable of the Draw-Net, recorded in Matt. xiii. 47–50, to be set on the right track of exposition. That parable belongs to a group of what are expressly called "Parables of the Kingdom of Heaven"; and having this designation, it presents in itself its own explanation. Above all, we have to turn to the corresponding earlier miracle of the draught of fishes,[2] where we have our Lord's own direction as to how it is to be understood. Peter at that time, as the eldest and most prominent of the disciples, the representative, as he had been the

[1] 3 John 7. [2] Luke v. 1–11.

spokesman, of the others, is thus addressed: "Fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men." This is put otherwise, but to the same effect, by Matthew and Mark, in the address to Peter and Andrew, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." These words at once set us on the true course—a path, indeed, which it is next to impossible to miss. But as if to place the matter even more plainly beyond doubt, we are directed, not only to the parable and the earlier miracle, but also to the renewed commission given to Peter, and in him to his brother disciples, in this closing chapter itself, and given, too, in closest connection with this sign. The scene in its delineation is as graphic as that which precedes it.[1] It is instinct with the reality of life. The Evangelist prefaces the account of the restoration of Peter after his deplorable fall by recording our Lord's question, "Lovest thou Me?" and the confession which that question evoked, "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest

[1] Ruskin (*Frondes Agrestes*, p. 154) has the following strictures on that "infinite monstrosity and hypocrisy," as he calls it, Raphael's cartoon of the charge to Peter: "Note first the bold fallacy—the putting *all* the apostles there, a mere lie to serve the Papal heresy of the Petric supremacy, by putting them all in the background while Peter receives the charge, and making them all witnesses to it. Note the handsomely curled hair and neatly tied sandals of the men who had been out all night in the sea-mists, and on the slimy decks; note their convenient dresses for going a-fishing, with trains that lie a yard along the ground, and goodly fringes —all made to match; an apostolic fishing costume. Note how Peter especially (whose chief glory was in his wet coat *girt* about him, and naked limbs) is enveloped in folds and fringes, so as to kneel and hold his keys with grace. No fire of coals at all, nor lonely mountain shore, but a pleasant Italian landscape, full of villas and churches, and a flock of sheep to be pointed at; and the whole group of the apostles, not round Christ, as they would have been naturally, but straggling away in a line, that they may be shown. The simple truth is, that the moment we look at the picture we feel our belief of the whole thing taken away. There is visibly no possibility of that group ever having existed, in any place or on any occasion. It is a mere mythic absurdity, and faded concoction of fringes, muscular arms, and curly heads of Greek philosophers."

that I love Thee." These, question and answer, are both, with certain significant variations which it does not concern us to consider now, three times repeated, as if the design were to recall the thrice uttered denial. Peter has already, on at least three separate occasions, seen his risen Lord; but it is only now that the silence is broken in regard to the one matter which has been lying nearest to both hearts. It is broken by our Lord Himself. The purpose of His inquiry is, beyond all doubt, alike to reprove, to restore, and to promote His conscience-stricken follower. On each repetition of it, it could not fail to fall as a hammer-stroke upon the sorrowing heart. At first it is estranging, for the very name by which he is addressed, "Simon, son of Jonas," sounds like a cancelling of the honourable name of Peter, with the gracious promise which was contained in it. It was in this way an arrow shot with unerring aim. But from estranging it passes, on repetition, to reassuring and encouraging. It almost distinctly says —Let the sorrowful past be effaced, let its troubled memories be forgotten. Thus, like the spear of Achilles, the question, while it wounds, can also heal. And now the answer, as it falls in accents of deepening emotion from Peter's lips, becomes a confession, full of mingled contrition and caution and confidence, as looking away from self he turns to his Master, and throws the searching inquiry back upon His all-embracing knowledge — a confession of changeless attachment and undying love. The Saviour, who can "thoughts unveil, e'en in their dumb cradle," had read His disciple's heart through and through,—had seen him "self-scorned, self-spoiled, self-hated, and self-slain," and He can therefore accept this confession of devotion, coming from such a humbled heart, as

altogether true. Hence now, and only now, there comes the commission, for it is love alone that can receive it and carry it out into action, "Feed My lambs; tend My sheep; feed My sheep." Thus in the full restoration of Peter, and in the full conferring of this commission, renewed to him, we have our Lord's command to His universal Church—one that holds good till the time of the end. The figure in the commission is that of the shepherd and the sheep; the figure in the sign is that of the fisher and the fish. The two emblems have at all times laid hold of the imagination of men; and the truth which they in their different ways represent is one. The command is to work on in the interests of the Saviour's kingdom, till at last the work be crowned with success, and earthly toil have passed into heavenly joy.

Accepting, therefore, this view of the sign, confirmed as it is by parable and miracle and commission alike, we have now to inquire how far the details of the incident can be legitimately pressed to yield significance. Here the real difficulty begins. We can, however, with tolerable clearness, notice that the general teaching separates itself into two parts. These can be readily distinguished. The first is the way in which the Risen Saviour's command is to be carried out by His people; and the second is the blessed fulness of result which is to be granted at its completion. Possibly we cannot go much farther than this. Yet the comparison of this miracle with its earlier parallel cannot safely be overlooked. While inculcating substantially the same prominent lesson, they present peculiar points of divergence, which are certainly noteworthy. The one, at least, is a very decided advance upon the other. They are both images of Christian toil on behalf

of Christ's kingdom—anxious and exhausting labour "upon the many waters," which John himself in Rev. xvii. 15 authoritatively explains as symbolising "peoples and multitudes, and nations and tongues." But the one portrays His servants chiefly in their work of contending with the world; the other, these same servants doing this same work, but under the immediate sanction and the guidance and the sustaining presence and aid of their Risen Lord. "One can see how, in general, the former represents a state of imperfection, of partial failure, of mixed good and ill; the latter, a state of absolutely perfect and secured good—a work accomplished and complete."[1] This sets us on the true path; and it leads right up to this view, that, as contrasted with the earlier miracle, this post-resurrection sign depicts the Church *invisible* in the long course of its ministry on till its close. In the Church visible, there are breaking and rent nets, even while the Lord Himself is there. There are imperfections and loss. Here, on the contrary, regarded in its invisible, and therefore its perfect and ideal aspect, the Church has no failure, no weakness and consequent loss. All are brought securely to land at last. "So shall it be at the end of the world."

The ministry of the saints, further, as this sign would teach us, being a ministry in their Lord's presence, and under the guidance of His eye, must ever be fulfilled in the spirit of entire self-surrender, in a deep sense of personal humility, and in prompt obedience to His words. Toil, indeed, and skill and patience are all demanded on their part in casting the gospel net. But while means are used, the blessing, though it may come mediately

[1] Professor Laidlaw, *The Miracles of Our Lord*, p. 384.

through them, comes solely from Him who, while He is as it were apart on the shore, is yet near, and commanding success on their work. His true people, assured of this, like the disciples on the Lake, can ever discern, the inner eye being opened to unseen realities, His presence even through the fading mists; they can also hear His familiar, reassuring voice, and at last they are invited to enjoy His fellowship when their work is done.[1]

This leads us to the second part of the sign. The meal prepared on the Lake shore, of which, in the purple light of morning, after the long night was past, the disciples are invited to partake, may be understood, without any undue straining, to be the emblem, not so much of spiritual support and refreshment and reward during work on earth (though these may not be excluded), as of the joyful refection and recompense at last, when the gathering in of the redeemed is full. We have noticed already how much of mystery envelops this part of the incident. It is impossible with any degree of confidence to try to penetrate it. Yet in the invitation, "Come and dine," which the Risen Saviour addresses to His followers, we instinctively feel our thoughts carried back to

[1] To dwell upon the minor points of the incident, such as the seven disciples, as contrasted with the four in the former miracle, the right side of the ship, the number of the fish, their large size, the distance of the vessel from the land, and several others, is to lower the whole meaning, and indeed it may be, to elude it altogether. Dr. Isaac Williams' *Devotional Commentary on the Gospel Narrative*, following, sometimes even outstripping, Patristric lead, has much to say on these matters. Sedulius, Lib. 5, Carm., has these lines on the nets—

"Pendula fluctivagam traxerunt retia prædam
Per typicam noscenda viam; nam retia dignis
Lucida sunt præcepta Dei, quibus omnis in illa
Dextra parte manens concluditur, ac simul ulnis
Fertur Apostolicis Domini ad vestigia Christi."

other words which fell from His lips as He spoke of the reward at the end of the days—"Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." If it do not symbolise the Lord's table on earth, as many hold that it does, it certainly is a prophetic type of His table in heaven.[1]

Thus, therefore, we find this post-resurrection sign—one which, as Keble says, "exhibits a kind of link or transition from Christ's earthly to His heavenly kingdom"—fitly closing the whole series of signs recorded in this Gospel, and even well-nigh closing the Gospel itself.

[1] There is a full description in Northcote and Brownlow's *Roma Sotteranea*, vol. ii., of the pictorial representation, in the Catacombs, of this miracle, with accompanying plates. The scene is depicted as partly historical and partly symbolical. "It is repeated in three or four chambers successively, with some slight variation, and sets before us seven men (in one instance the figures are nude) seated at a couch-table, with dishes of fish before them, and eight or twelve baskets of bread arranged along the floor in front of the picture," p. 67. There is also in the same work to be found a full discussion, from the Roman Catholic point of view, of the sacred symbol of the fish, *ἰχθύς*,—a symbol both of Christ and of Christians. St. Paulinus of Nola is quoted as saying: "The Christian preacher, as the fisher of men, draws forth freely for God, by means of the hook of the life-giving word, from the deep and bitter waves of this world, rather to give them new life than to destroy them." With this saying may be compared the part of the grand Orphic hymn, attributed to Clement of Alexandria, which has been chosen as the heading of this chapter.

CONCLUSION.

Such are the eight acts of His Lord which the beloved disciple records as showing forth His glory — transparencies through which the living glory gleamed. We can think of the Evangelist lingering still among men in "the sunset of the apostolic age" —wearing, to use the language of the early Church, the mitre of the faith, and setting down in this book for all ages these *Memorabilia* which had lain long stored as sacred treasures in his heart. What he has thus written are in no wise the long-cherished yet confused phantasies of his own age-worn imagination, as some have ventured to say, but simply the impressions of a strange early life which could never be effaced. As he had lain in the far distant past of his youth on his Master's bosom at supper, and learned there the mystery of His divinity, so through life, and now in old age, he retained in his inmost heart the abiding presence of His love. The impressions of those years when he companied with His Lord—the impression made on his sensitive and loving heart could not be otherwise than fixed, and hence, at last, before he passed from toil to triumph, his duty and delight are solely to witness. "He saw and bare record, and his record is true;" and "He knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe." Like the fabled Bononian stone[1] which, when placed in exposure to the sun, absorbs the warm light, and then radiates it

[1] Goethe, *Werthers-Leiden.*

forth, so was John's heart in relation to Him who is the Light of the world. He received the truth by simply beholding, and he reflects it by simply testifying. And, while thus testifying to facts, a meaning, which at first he could not see in them, became clear to him—these wonder-works of his Master were signs —each, as it were, "a golden ray streaming out from His presence and opening up a line of light far into the kingdom of God."[1] For this express purpose has he recorded them, that men in all time to come might "believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing they might have life in His name."

To distinguish and analyse these several rays with any approach to exactness, is a task beyond our power. At best there must remain much of vagueness; the varying colours melt into one another. None the less, as having their carefully assigned places in the Gospel, and as receiving their explanation in most cases from their surroundings, these signs, as we have endeavoured to show, are set before us as distinct types, whose general significance we cannot fail to discover. They all lead the inquiring student of them to Him who, in His creative energy in the moral and spiritual world, is ceaselessly ennobling and making all things new,—who gives to the individual soul a higher life, and a new consecration through faith unto salvation,—to His Church all spiritual sustenance and protection—to the world, in the progress of His cause, light and life,—and

[1] Bishop Alexander, *Leading Ideas of the Gospels*, p. 188. In his enumeration of the miracles in this Gospel, he includes two others, our Lord's hiding Himself, not as a timid man crouching behind the pillars of the temple, but as God hides Himself in nature, chap. viii. 59, and the going back and falling to the ground of the band who came to arrest Jesus, chap. xviii. 6. But whatever may be said of these as wonder-works, they have no place in the list of *signs*.

to His faithful ones at last, the joy of finished work and perfected satisfaction in heaven.

As in Matt., chap. xiii., we have a group of parables of the kingdom, so in the miracles which we have gathered together from "the spiritual Gospel" we have a group of signs of our Lord's glory in that kingdom which now is "the kingdom and patience," and is at last to become "the kingdom and glory."

MORRISON AND GIBB, PRINTERS, EDINBURGH.

The International Theological Library

EDITED BY

STEWART D. F. SALMOND, D.D.,
Professor of Systematic Theology and New Testament Exegesis, Free Church College, Aberdeen;

AND

CHARLES A. BRIGGS, D.D.,
Edward Robinson Professor of Biblical Theology, Union Theological Seminary, New York.

1. CANON DRIVER'S INTRODUCTION to the LITERATURE of the OLD TESTAMENT.

Now ready, THIRD EDITION, *post* 8*vo*, *price* 12*s*.,

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE LITERATURE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

BY S. R. DRIVER, D.D.,
REGIUS PROFESSOR OF HEBREW, AND CANON OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD.

EXTRACT FROM THE PREFACE.

'I ought, in the first instance, to guard against any misapprehension as to the scope of the work. It is not an Introduction to the *Theology*, or to the *History*, or even to the *Study*, of the Old Testament; in any of these cases, the treatment and contents would have been very different. It is an Introduction to the *Literature* of the Old Testament; and what I conceived this to include was an account of the contents and structure of the several books, together with such an indication of their *general* character and aim as I could find room for in the space at my disposal. . . .

'Criticism in the hands of Christian scholars does not banish or destroy the inspiration of the Old Testament; it *pre-supposes* it; it seeks only to determine the conditions under which it operates, and the literary forms through which it manifests itself; and it thus helps us to frame truer conceptions of the methods which it has pleased God to employ in revealing Himself to His ancient people of Israel, and in preparing the way for the fuller manifestation of Himself in Christ Jesus.'—S. R. D.

'The appearance of Professor Driver's book has been eagerly looked forward to by scholars interested in Old Testament subjects. And now that the volume has been given to the world, we hasten to assure our readers that however high their expectations may have been raised, they are not likely to be disappointed. He has succeeded in giving by far the best account of the great critical problems connected with the Old Testament that has yet been written. . . . It is a perfect marvel of compression and lucidity combined. It is a monument of learning and well-balanced judgment, which does honour to the chair which Professor Driver holds, and the university to which he belongs.'—*The Guardian.*

'The author's plan is excellent. First he gives an outline of the book he is dealing with. Then follows a literary analysis of it, the various parts being assigned, with as near an approach to exactness as is possible, to the different sources; and finally, the date of the sources and of the book in its present form is inquired into. All this is executed with much learning, great candour, every consideration for the opinions of others, but firm assertion of his own right to judge. . . . The projected series of Manuals could not have been opened more worthily. The work contains everything required by students.'—Prof. A. B. DAVIDSON, D.D., in *The Bookman.*

'One need have no hesitation in saying that it is out of sight the most valuable contribution which English scholarship has yet made to the Pentateuch.'—Prof. A. R. S. KENNEDY, M.A., in *The Expository Times.*

'Upon few theological works has such general interest been concentrated as upon this important work from the pen of Canon Driver. Few books, I venture to think, will have rendered such signal service to the cause, so dear to all Christian students, of the reverent, thorough, and painstaking study of Holy Scripture. Messrs. Clark may well be congratulated upon having been able to open their "International Theological Library" with a volume of such remarkable merits. In every respect its appearance at the present time is most opportune.'—Prof. H. E. RYLE, M.A., in *The Critical Review.*

Detailed Prospectuses of the 'International Theological Library' free on application.

In demy 8vo, price 10s. 6d.,

BOOKS WHICH INFLUENCED OUR LORD AND HIS APOSTLES:

Being a Critical Review of Apocalyptic Jewish Literature.

By JOHN E. H. THOMSON, B.D., Stirling.

'This is a clever, imaginative, scholarly, interesting volume. Mr. Thomson has the gift of making the old world times and personages live again; and his book, being written with unflagging spirit, is likely to prove of value by investing the apocalyptic writings with an attractiveness they have not always seemed to possess. . . . A book which is a credit to Scottish scholarship. . . . It is a volume worthy of the attention both of scholars and of the public.'—Prof. Marcus Dods, D.D., in *The Expositor.*

In post 8vo, price 7s. 6d.,

PSEUDEPIGRAPHA:

AN ACCOUNT OF CERTAIN APOCRYPHAL SACRED WRITINGS OF THE JEWS AND EARLY CHRISTIANS.

BY THE

Rev. WILLIAM J. DEANE, M.A.,

RECTOR OF ASHEN, ESSEX;
AUTHOR OF 'THE BOOK OF WISDOM, WITH PROLEGOMENA AND COMMENTARY' (OXFORD: CLARENDON PRESS), ETC. ETC.

CONTENTS: — Introduction. — I. Lyrical—The Psalter of Solomon. — II. Apocalyptical and Prophetical—The Book of Enoch. The Assumption of Moses. The Apocalypse of Baruch. The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. —III. Legendary—The Book of Jubilees. The Ascension of Isaiah.—IV. Mixed—The Sibylline Oracles.

'It is the most complete book on the subject in the English language, and contains the most ample information on these writings. It is indispensable to every scholar who wishes to be acquainted with this class of literature, and should occupy a place in the library of every theologian.'—Rev. Dr. Gloag in *The Theological Monthly.*

'A very much needed introduction to a literature which is too little read. . . . Mr. Deane has not only spent much time and scholarship in securing accuracy, but he presents his material in an attractive form, in an admirable style. . . . Full knowledge of the literature of his subject, a sound and fair judgment, a clear perception, a style full of life, and above all, long familiarity with his subject, constitute Mr. Deane our best guide to the Pseudepigrapha.'—*The Expositor.*

In post 8vo, price 7s. 6d.,

MESSIANIC PROPHECY:

ITS ORIGIN, HISTORICAL GROWTH, AND RELATION TO NEW TESTAMENT FULFILMENT.

By Dr. EDWARD RIEHM.

New Edition, Translated by Rev. LEWIS A. MUIRHEAD, B.D.

With an Introduction by Professor A. B. DAVIDSON, D.D.

'No work of the same compass could be named that contains so much that is instructive on the nature of prophecy in general, and particularly on the branch of it specially treated in the book.'—Professor A. B. Davidson, D.D.

'I would venture to recommend Riehm's "Messianic Prophecy" as a summary account of prophecy both reverent and critical.'—Principal Gore in *Lux Mundi.*

GRIMM'S LEXICON.

Just published, SECOND EDITION, REVISED, *demy 4to, price 36s.*,

GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT,

BEING

Grimm's Wilke's Clavis Novi Testamenti.

TRANSLATED, REVISED, AND ENLARGED

BY JOSEPH HENRY THAYER, D.D.,

BUSSEY PROFESSOR OF NEW TESTAMENT CRITICISM AND INTERPRETATION IN THE DIVINITY SCHOOL OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

EXTRACT FROM PREFACE.

'TOWARDS the close of the year 1862, the "Arnoldische Buchhandlung" in Leipzig published the First Part of a Greek-Latin Lexicon of the New Testament, prepared, upon the basis of the "Clavis Novi Testamenti Philologica" of C. G. Wilke (second edition, 2 vols. 1851), by Professor C. L. WILIBALD GRIMM of Jena. In his Prospectus, Professor Grimm announced it as his purpose not only (in accordance with the improvements in classical lexicography embodied in the Paris edition of Stephen's Thesaurus and in the fifth edition of Passow's Dictionary edited by Rost and his coadjutors) to exhibit the historical growth of a word's significations, and accordingly in selecting his vouchers for New Testament usage to show at what time and in what class of writers a given word became current, but also duly to notice the usage of the Septuagint and of the Old Testament Apocrypha, and especially to produce a Lexicon which should correspond to the present condition of textual criticism, of exegesis, and of biblical theology. He devoted more than seven years to his task. The successive Parts of his work received, as they appeared, the outspoken commendation of scholars diverging as widely in their views as Hupfeld and Hengstenberg; and since its completion in 1868 it has been generally acknowledged to be by far the best Lexicon of the New Testament extant.'

'I regard it as a work of the greatest importance. . . . It seems to me a work showing the most patient diligence, and the most carefully arranged collection of useful and helpful references.'—THE BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL.

'The best New Testament Greek Lexicon. . . . It is a treasury of the results of exact scholarship.'—BISHOP WESTCOTT.

'An excellent book, the value of which for English students will, I feel sure, be best appreciated by those who use it most carefully.'—Professor F. J. A. HORT, D.D.

'This work has been eagerly looked for. . . . The result is an excellent book, which I do not doubt will be the best in the field for many years to come.'—Professor W. SANDAY, D.D., in *The Academy*.

'This is indeed a noble volume, and satisfies in these days of advancing scholarship a very great want. It is certainly unequalled in its lexicography, and invaluable in its literary perfectness. . . . It should, will, must make for itself a place in the library of all those students who want to be thoroughly furnished for the work of understanding, expounding, and applying the Word of God.'—*Evangelical Magazine*.

'Undoubtedly the best of its kind. Beautifully printed and well translated, with some corrections and improvements of the original, it will be prized by students of the Christian Scriptures.'—*Athenæum*.

'It should be obtained even at the sacrifice of many volumes of sermons and homiletical aids. There is nothing so intellectually remunerative in ministerial life as foundation work of this kind. Without it no ministry can be solid and strong, nor can its results be profound and abiding. Rarely have Messrs. Clark laid our British Churches under deeper obligations than they have done by the issue of this noble and scholarly work.'—*Baptist Magazine*.

Just published, in demy 8vo, price 7s. 6d.,

CANON AND TEXT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

By Dr. FRANTS BUHL,
PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY AT LEIPZIG.

Translated by Rev. JOHN MACPHERSON, M.A.

*** *Professor Buhl is successor to the late Prof. Franz Delitzsch, at Leipzig.*

'It would be difficult to find a more comprehensive, succinct, and lucid digest of the results of recent study of the Old Testament canon and text than is given in this volume. Instead of bewildering us with a crowd of discordant opinions, the author sifts the evidence and indicates the right conclusion. His tone is eminently free and impartial. He is no slave to tradition, and no lover of novelty for its own sake. The discussion in the text is kept clear by the relegation of further references and quotations to supplementary paragraphs. These paragraphs are a perfect mine of exact, detailed information.'—Prof. J. S. Banks in *The Critical Review.*

'A book of high merit.'—Canon Cheyne, D.D.

In One large Vol., 8vo, price 14s.,

A HISTORY OF GERMAN THEOLOGY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

By F. LICHTENBERGER, D.D.,
DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF PROTESTANT THEOLOGY OF PARIS.

Revised and brought up to date, with important additions specially prepared for the English Edition by the Author.

Translated by W. HASTIE, B.D.,
EXAMINER IN THEOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

'As to the importance of an accurate and comprehensive history of German theology, diversity of opinion is impossible. . . . We welcome this work as an indispensable aid to the theological student, as a valuable repertory of historical information, and a series of luminous and effective criticisms. Its learning, its calm judicial tone, its fine insight, and its lucidity and candour impart to it quite exceptional worth.'—*Baptist Magazine.*

'Messrs. Clark have seldom or never done a more seasonable, useful, or welcome thing than to publish a translation of Lichtenberger's critical survey of the grand movement of German thought in the province of theology during the last hundred years.'—*Christian World.*

'Such a work speaks for itself. Packed full of information, interesting in style, it will long remain a guide to the complexities of German theology.'—*Methodist Times.*

In post 8vo, price 9s.,

PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY,

The First Edinburgh University Gifford Lectures.

By J. HUTCHISON STIRLING, LL.D. (Edin.),
FOREIGN MEMBER OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF BERLIN,
GIFFORD LECTURER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH, 1888–89.

'This volume will make for itself many friends. There is a bracing, stimulating masterfulness about the lectures, which, on a careful perusal of them, will be found to lead to many rich veins of thought. . . . His work may be summed up as another splendid assertion of Thought, Intelligence, as after all that which is essential in the universe.'—Prof. Stewart in *The Critical Review.*

'Dr. Stirling has done splendid service, both to the history of Philosophy and Theology, and to these great sciences themselves.'—Prof. Iverach in *The British Weekly.*

'The lectures are racy in style, and are capital reading. . . . Should be mastered by every student of the subject. The volume is a distinct contribution to this branch of theological science.'—*Church Bells.*

Just published, in crown 8vo, price 5s.,

MESSIANIC PROPHECIES

IN HISTORICAL SUCCESSION.

By FRANZ DELITZSCH.

TRANSLATED BY PROF. S. I. CURTISS, D.D., CHICAGO.

'The proofs of this volume were corrected by the author on his deathbed, and the Preface was dictated by him five days before his death. There is something sacred about such a book. It embodies the results of the most recent scholarly investigation, and at the same time breathes the spirit of deep and fervent Christian faith. In times when it needs the greatest care to handle wisely the subject of Messianic Prophecy, the student could not well have a better guide than this short but comprehensive volume. It is as full of instruction as it is a help to discriminating faith. We heartily wish it a wide circulation.'—*Methodist Recorder.*

DELITZSCH'S NEW COMMENTARY ON GENESIS.

Now complete, in Two Vols., 8vo, price 21s.,

A NEW COMMENTARY ON GENESIS.

By PROFESSOR FRANZ DELITZSCH, D.D., LEIPZIG.

NOTE.—While preparing the translation, the translator has been favoured by Prof. Delitzsch with such numerous improvements and additions, that it may be regarded as made from a revised version of the New Commentary on Genesis.

'We congratulate Prof. Delitzsch on this new edition. By it, not less than by his other commentaries, he has earned the gratitude of every lover of biblical science, and we shall be surprised if, in the future, many do not acknowledge that they have found in it a welcome help and guide.'—Professor S. R. DRIVER in *The Academy.*

'We wish it were in our power to follow in detail the contents of Dr. Delitzsch's most interesting introduction, and to give specimens of the admirable, concise, and lucid notes in his exposition; but we have said enough to show our readers our high estimate of the value of the work.'—*Church Bells.*

'The work of a reverent mind and a sincere believer, and not seldom there are touches of great beauty and of spiritual insight in it.'—*Guardian.*

Just published, in Two Vols., 8vo, price 21s.,

THE PROPHECIES OF ISAIAH.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FOURTH AND LAST EDITION. *The only Authorised Translation.*

By PROFESSOR FRANZ DELITZSCH, D.D., LEIPZIG.

'Delitzsch's last gift to the Christian Church. . . . In our opinion, those who would enter into the meaning of that Spirit as He spake long ago by Isaiah, words of comfort and hope which have not lost their significance to-day, cannot find a better guide; one more marked by learning, reverence, and insight, than Franz Delitzsch.'—Professor W. T. DAVISON in *The Expository Times.*

'Commentaries in Europe are not often republished after their authors' deaths, whatever is of permanent value in them being appropriated by their successors. But it may be long before one undertakes the task of expounding the Prophets possessing so many gifts and employing them so well.'—*Guardian.*

WORKS BY PROFESSOR A. B. BRUCE, D.D.

In post 8vo, New Edition, Revised, price 7s. 6d.,

THE KINGDOM OF GOD;

OR,

CHRIST'S TEACHING ACCORDING TO THE SYNOPTICAL GOSPELS.

By A. B. BRUCE, D.D.,

PROFESSOR OF NEW TESTAMENT EXEGESIS IN THE FREE CHURCH COLLEGE, GLASGOW.

CONTENTS :—Critical Introduction.—CHAP. I. Christ's Idea of the Kingdom.—II. Christ's Attitude towards the Mosaic Law. — III. The Conditions of Entrance.—IV. Christ's Doctrine of God.—V. Christ's Doctrine of Man.—VI. The Relation of Jesus to Messianic Hopes and Functions.—VII. The Son of Man and the Son of God.—VIII. The Righteousness of the Kingdom—Negative Aspect.—IX. The Righteousness of the Kingdom—Positive Aspect.—X. The Death of Jesus and its Significance.—XI. The Kingdom and the Church.—XII. The Parousia and the Christian Era.—XIII. The History of the Kingdom in Outline.—XIV. The End.—XV. The Christianity of Christ.—Index.

'To Dr. Bruce belongs the honour of giving to English-speaking Christians the first really scientific treatment of this transcendent theme . . . his book is the best monograph on the subject in existence. . . . He is evidently in love with his subject, and every page exhibits the intense enthusiasm of a strong nature for the Divine Teacher.'—Rev. JAMES STALKER, D.D., in *The British Weekly.*

'The astonishing vigour and the unfailing insight which characterise the book mark a new era in biblical theology. In fact, as in all Dr. Bruce's writings, so here we find ourselves in the company of one whose earnest faith in the matter of the Gospel narratives prevents him from treating the doctrine of Christ merely in a scholastic style, or as an interesting subject for theory and speculation.'—Professor MARCUS DODS, D.D., in *The Theological Review.*

'A remarkable book.'—*Saturday Review.*

In demy 8vo, Fourth Edition, price 10s. 6d.,

THE TRAINING OF THE TWELVE;

OR, EXPOSITION OF PASSAGES IN THE GOSPELS EXHIBITING THE TWELVE DISCIPLES OF JESUS UNDER DISCIPLINE FOR THE APOSTLESHIP.

'A volume which can never lose its charm either for the preacher or for the ordinary Christian reader.'—*London Quarterly Review.*

'A great book, full of suggestion and savour. It should be the companion of the minister, for the theme is peculiarly related to himself, and he would find it a very pleasant and profitable companion, for its author has filled it with good matter.'—Mr. SPURGEON in *Sword and Trowel.*

In demy 8vo, Third Edition, price 10s. 6d.,

THE HUMILIATION OF CHRIST

IN ITS PHYSICAL, ETHICAL, AND OFFICIAL ASPECTS.

'These lectures are able and deep-reaching to a degree not often found in the religious literature of the day; withal, they are fresh and suggestive. . . . The learning and the deep and sweet spirituality of this discussion will commend it to many faithful students of the truth as it is in Jesus.'—*Congregationalist.*

'We have not for a long time met with a work so fresh and suggestive as this of Professor Bruce. . . . We do not know where to look at our English Universities for a treatise so calm, logical, and scholarly.'—*English Independent.*

'The title of the book gives but a faint conception of the value and wealth of its contents. . . . Dr. Bruce's work is really one of exceptional value; and no one can read it without perceptible gain in theological knowledge.'—*English Churchman.*